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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

ALBERTA'S DEPARTMENT OF NEGLECTED CHILDREN, 1909-1929: A CASE STUDY IN CHILD SAVING

by

(C) REBECCA COULTER

A THESIS

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled "Alberta's Department of Neglected Children, 1909-1929: A Case Study in Child Saving"

submitted by Rebecca Coulter

in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education

in History of Education

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Date August 31, 1977

For my parents, Jean and Albert Priegert

ABSTRACT

Child saving, or the care and protection of neglected, dependent and delinquent children, was part of the larger social reform movement which was prominent in Canada from about 1880 to 1920. To understand the work of the child savers and the impact they had on the larger society, it is necessary to know more about them. In order to add to the growing collection of research in the field, this thesis examines a specific child saving endeavour which arose and developed in Alberta.

In 1909 the Department of Neglected Children was established in Alberta and for twenty years the superintendent and staff were responsible for child protection work throughout the province. The bulk of this thesis consists of a descriptive case study of the work of the Department of Neglected Children and is primarily organized around an examination of the ideology and practice of the child savers although some attempt is made to relate these two aspects to the material conditions in society. In addition, the case study is used to test the adequacy of social control theory as an explanation of the work of the child savers.

Social control theorists postulate that the middle class reformers were motivated by self-interest and that they imposed their value system on the working class. Based on the Alberta case study, this thesis concludes that these hypotheses are inadequate explanations

of the work of the child savers, the first because it fails to take into account the importance of ideology in human practice and the second because it limits the role of members of the working class to that of passive recipients. Additionally, it is pointed out that the work of the child savers, and social workers in general, played an important educative role in keeping alive humanistic values in a capitalist society.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Shortly after the turn of the century, child welfare became a matter of some concern to one segment of Alberta's population. The concrete result of this interest was the passage in 1909 of An Act for the Protection of Neglected and Dependent Children.[1] This Act empowered the Attorney-General to appoint a Superintendent of Neglected Children to initiate and carry out child saving work in the province. Accordingly, a Department of Neglected Children was promptly established and it continued in operation for twenty years before giving way to other administrative arrangements. The work of this Department of Neglected Children, as a representative example of a child saving endeavour, provides the main theme for this thesis.

Child saving work in Alberta was part of a larger English-Canadian social reform movement which gained particular prominence from 1880 to 1920. The social reformers of this earlier period were concerned with and acted on issues such as urban planning, social welfare and women's rights. That these same issues are significant today is self-evident and helps to explain why the social reform movement has recently become a topic of research for many Canadian historians. As Elizabeth Fee has pointed out, "The reconstruction of the past in turn serves present needs as it clarifies or justifies the contours of present reality."[2]

In the past, both Careless and Berger[3] explain, Canadian history emphasized the political and constitutional changes which occurred as Canada progressed toward nationhood. Similarly, in educational history, a Whiggish approach[4] to the growth of educational institutions and the establishment of a system of public education can be observed in the works of such people as C.E. Phillips.[5] But just as the "political nationhood" school was superceded by the economic interpretation of the Innis-Creighton school, so, too, did educational history experience a revision. Sparked by an American, Bernard Bailyn, who admonished educational historians to view education "in its elaborate intricate involvements with the rest of society,"[6] the Canadian revisionists began to do just that by examining the relationship between schooling and the broader political, economic and social conditions of society.[7]

The most recent trend in Canadian historiography, and one which has implications for all historians including educational historians, has been the pursuit of a social history which will not simply fill in "the old Canadian historiographic tradition with odd facts and events" but will when complete, "constitute a new distinctive synthesis of Canadian history."[8] Taking to heart Hobsbawm's warning that "the social or societal aspects of man's being cannot be separated from the other aspects of his being, except at the cost of tautology or extreme trivialization,"[9] and clearly influenced by the intellectual traditions of Marxism, this new school of social historians, in attempting to understand and explain the intricate and complex fabric of Canadian society as it existed in the past, has come to realize the importance of education as a

factor in the development of Canadian social life. How people learn what is expected of them, how they come to accept or reject certain aspects of their life, how these beliefs and values are transmitted from generation to generation, become questions of paramount importance. As a result of this growing awareness of the significant impact of education, a rapprochement is occurring between educational historians and historians in general. This trend has been further encouraged by the growing willingness of most historians to use the theoretical frameworks and methodologies of the other social sciences in their own work.

Representative of this new breed of historian in Canada is Michael Katz who utilizes a class analysis to make sense of the massive volume of data collected by the methodological approach termed quantification.[10] Katz and his colleagues have questioned the conventional wisdom that equates formal schooling with progress and, in asking questions about "the motives and the circumstances of educational change in the past,"[11] they have begun to look at family life and childhood in Canada, not in isolation from but in conjunction with a study of the economic and social realities of the past. It is in this way that educational history, understood in the broad sense, has become an important component of Canadian social history.

Within this context, it is easy to see, too, why social historians, in seeking to achieve the new synthesis of Canadian history mentioned earlier, must take cognizance of the historical development of family life, particularly as it relates to children. As we become increasingly aware of the fact that the approaches to

child rearing and socialization adopted in a society can make a great difference in the degree to which people accept or reject political, economic and social conditions in that society, the importance of the study of the history of childhood becomes apparent. Furthermore, as Aries[12] has correctly contended, we can learn much about a culture from the way young people are treated within it. Thus, if we expect to understand human societies in either the historical or the present situation, we must know about the lives of children, the treatment they received as they were growing up and the institutions created to care for them. It is this new interest in childhood and families which partially explains why some social historians have been led to the study of the North American social reform movement which gained particular prominence in the period from 1880 to 1920.

Prior to this time, poverty, and the conditions resulting from it, had, for the most part, been viewed as the natural order of things. The Reverend Henry Ward Beecher claimed that "God intended the great to be great and the little to be little."[13] To this theological argument was added the "scientific" one, proposed by Herbert Spencer, and known as Social Darwinism. As Galbraith has pointed out, Social Darwinism, as an ideology, could not have pleased America's capitalists more for the rich had not only their wealth to enjoy but also "the almost equal enjoyment which came with the knowledge that one had it because one was better."[14]

Elements of the growing middle class, however, felt somewhat differently about malnutrition, disease, child labour, infant mortality, prostitution, slums, and the other social problems which seemed to mushroom along with the growth of cities. Their distress

was aggravated by the revelations of the muckrakers in the United States and their equivalents such as Herbert Ames and J.J. Kelso in Canada. Faced with the appalling condition of the poor, with crime, prostitution and intemperance, some members of the middle class resolved to improve society. This resolve led to their involvement with a whole host of issues including temperance, workmen's compensation, improved housing, the control of immigration, mothers' pensions, day nurseries, supervised playgrounds, the abolition of the "white slave trade", public health care, kindergartens, the censorship of impure literature, vocational education, divorce laws, factory legislation, urban transportation, adult education and more.[15] This group of people, who were largely middle class, urban and Protestant in origin, attempted "to develop the moral will, the intellectual insight, and the political and administrative agencies to remedy the accumulated evils and negligences of a period of industrial growth."[16] These are the people who are collectively known as the social reformers.

One of the major concerns of the social reformers was the quality of life experienced by children, particularly as it related to their family situation. Historians in the United States have given considerable attention to the work of these child savers in their country,[17] but Canadian historians have not been correspondingly occupied. Although there has been widespread interest in the Canadian reform movement on the part of scholars like Richard Allen, Paul Rutherford and Veronica Strong-Boag, their research has been in areas other than child welfare. On the other hand, historians like Richard Splane, Judith Fingard and Susan Houston, who have examined topics related to child welfare, have generally done so for an

earlier period in Canadian history. The most notable exceptions to this observation are Neil Sutherland and T.R. Morrison.[18] Their research, while it deals primarily with the Ontario experience, has shown the importance of trying to understand the work of the Canadian social reformers in the field of child welfare. Despite the limited geographical scope of their research, they clearly show how the social reformers set the stage for current practices in child welfare. Sutherland additionally illustrates the role they played in the development of public education and public health services.

Unfortunately, the only major published work on English - Canadian children is Sutherland's book.[19] This work basically assumes that what was true for Ontario with respect to the care of children will be true for all of English-Canada. There is a need to test this assumption through an examination of the child welfare practices that arose in other parts of Canada. The depth of this need is further emphasized by an examination of the two main conclusions Sutherland reaches about child welfare work. He concludes, first of all, that English-Canadians changed, mostly for the better, their treatment of neglected and dependent children and secondly, he claims that the child savers helped bring about a more ordered society.[20] The very general nature of these conclusions, and their reliance on hidden assumptions, only serves to stress the need for more research which will deal with the specific and concrete examples of child-saving in all regions of Canada. Before adequate explanations of child welfare work can be evolved, consideration must be given to "specific sets of actors and values, and the circumstances in which they occurred."[21] Based on this conviction the

author has chosen to pursue the topic of child welfare in Alberta in order to begin the necessary task of outlining developments in this specific and concrete case.

The intent of this thesis is two-fold. Based on the assumption that before the meaning of historical events can be understood, one must determine what happened, the first task of this work will be to describe the ideology and activities of the child savers in Alberta. This study will take the form of an examination of the care offered by the Department of Neglected Children to youngsters who were deemed to be neglected, dependent and delinquent in Alberta during the twenty year period from 1909 to 1929. After the proclamation of An Act for the Protection of Neglected and Dependent Children (hereafter called The Children's Protection Act) in 1909, the framework for administering the Act was established with the creation of a Department of Neglected Children. This Department was headed up by a Superintendent of Neglected Children who reported to the Attorney-General. During the time period covered by this thesis, three men held the superintendency and oversaw child saving work in the province. The three superintendents were R.B. Chadwick who was appointed in 1909 and died in office in 1915, A.M. McDonald who held the post from 1915 to 1919 when he left to accept employment with the City of Cleveland, and K.C. McLeod who retained the position from 1919 to 1929 when child welfare became part of the Bureau of Charity and Relief and, as such, simply part of the more general welfare considerations of the depression years.

The Children's Protection Act gave the Superintendent of Neglected Children broad powers in the child welfare field. Thus,

while child protection goals were to be achieved through a combination of government and private endeavours, the Superintendent was responsible for supervising child welfare in the province and could "advise" and "instruct" the volunteer groups involved in child saving work. Because of this the Department of Neglected Children played a critical role in child welfare work in Alberta and the superintendents became central figures in the more general child saving movement and, to a large extent, spokesmen for it. Consequently, an examination of the work of this Department will provide important insights into the development of a child welfare system in the province.

The second purpose of this thesis is interpretive in nature. An explanatory device which has frequently been used in the recent literature in both schooling and child welfare has been the one known as social control theory. Within a socio-historical perspective, social control theorists see the work of the social reformers to be nothing more than a manifestation of self-interest. Reformers are seen as conscious manipulators of ideas and creators of institutions designed to control members of the working class in order to make them malleable and industrious workers. Public schools and juvenile courts, for example, are seen as middle class impositions, designed to force a standard moral order on the lower class. Typical of the social control theorists is Anthony Platt[22] who, in a recent study on the juvenile court movement in the United States, claimed that middle class reformers wanted to repress children, specifically children of the poor, by imposing sanctions on premature independence and "unbecoming behaviour". To accomplish this they created special juvenile courts which divested children of their privacy and their

civil liberties. These child savers, argued Platt, were neither libertarians nor humanists; they were conservatives who re-affirmed traditional authoritarian patterns of social order.

In this thesis, an attempt will be made to test the applicability of social control theory as a satisfactory explanation of the work of the child savers in Alberta. Two specific and integral components of this theory will be used to analyze the child savers. Thus we will seek to determine, first of all, if the child savers were simply motivated by self-interest as social control theorists maintain, or whether other considerations must be taken into account. Secondly, we will examine the contention that child savers imposed their value system on the working class.

In order to accomplish these two tasks, the historical sources must be examined. All three superintendents issued Annual Reports[23] as part of their work and it is these reports which provide the richest source of historical information we have on child saving in Alberta. While McLeod's reports are terse and mainly statistical in nature, Chadwick and McDonald's reports are lengthy expositions of the work of their Department. They both explain in some detail why child protection was necessary and what methods were being used to accomplish those goals. A second feature of the Annual Reports, until 1925, was the inclusion in them of reports from Children's Aid Societies and Probation officers in Edmonton, Calgary, Medicine Hat and Lethbridge and from the Industrial School in Portage la Prairie, which Alberta used through an agreement with the Manitoba government. Additionally, for the years 1909 to 1919, the reports also contained

samples of letters received from foster parents and foster children along with photographs illustrative of both the situation of the neglected child and the "saved" child.

Although there is some statistical information on the children who were cared for by the Department available as part of the Annual Reports, this documentation has limited value. There are several reasons for this. Perhaps most importantly, the superintendents themselves indicated at various times that their statistics did not convey a true picture of the number of cases dealt with by the Department. Aside from the difficulties resulting from differences in reporting years, those cases which were "satisfactorily adjusted" without recourse to the courts were never recorded although McLeod did make some attempt to do so in the late 1920's. Gattrell and Hadden[24] have noted two difficulties in the use of criminal statistics, but their criticism holds just as well for child welfare statistics in general. The first difficulty relates to the fact that these statistics can never reflect the "actual" extent of the criminal, delinquent or child abuse activity in society; rather the statistics tell us only how many people were "caught" and dealt with by the institutions created for this purpose. The second difficulty lies with the fact that legal, police and social welfare developments must affect the consistency of the recorded incidence of criminal, delinquent and child abuse activity across a period of time. It is for these reasons that the statistics of the Department of Neglected Children have been used sparingly in this thesis.

Despite a search of the catalogued listings of archival materials in Alberta, the only other significant source of information

discovered was the incomplete files of the Department of Neglected Children. These files cover the period 1917 to 1929 and include correspondence, Alberta Provincial Police Reports, financial records and miscellanceous other material. They are, however, little more than general files and even at that they are incomplete. Those files which deal in some detail with specific cases are still closed to the researcher and it would appear that the bulk of the inspectors' reports, foster parent applications and the like have been destroyed.

The most important limitation placed on this thesis by the sources is the fact that they are all basically in-house documents. While a few letters from foster parents and outraged natural parents are available, most of the extant material was written by the child savers themselves. Thus it reflects the views of the child savers only and is to some extent, at least, self-justifying. How the people who were affected by the work of the child savers felt is a story that will remain untold in this thesis and may, in fact, always remain untold. Certainly we will never know how apprehended children dealt with their situation except through the eyes of adults who observed the phenomenon or through the recall of those same children, now adults. As adults and with the passage of years, the memories, while valuable, would contain distortions, too. This is one of the frustrations of writing any history of childhood for one is faced always with the adult view of children and childhood. It is this frustration which has led Philip Stewart to remark, "The 'history of childhood' does not exist; it must be created - but not invented."[25]

Throughout this thesis, reference will be made to the "child savers". This is the term that was employed by the people involved

in the care and protection of neglected, dependent and delinquent children to describe themselves and this usage will be continued by the author. As well, child welfare and child protection will be used synonymously with child saving. In cases where the child savers are discussed as part of the larger social reform movement, they will be referred to as social reformers.

In preparing this thesis, consideration was given to Livingstone's[26] contention that a satisfactory model of social reality must include the following basic categories:

1. The historical material context in which people act.
2. The cultural and ideological forms they take for granted.
3. Their own efforts to interpret the world to themselves.
4. Their actual conduct.

However, because the author feels that Livingstone's second and third categories unnecessarily bifurcate the two aspects of a total conception of ideology, the cultural and ideological forms the reformers took for granted and their efforts to interpret the world will be considered together as "ideology".

The following organizational structure has been adopted in this thesis. After the introduction to the topic presented in this chapter, chapter two will outline the material conditions in Alberta for the period from 1909 to 1929. Particular emphasis will be given to those conditions which are judged to be most relevant to a study of the work of the child savers. Chapter three will provide an examination of the ideology of the social reformers. Leff has convincingly argued that all human action belongs to a frame of reference composed of "assumptions and intentions, habits and ends,

interests and ideals, values and knowledge",[27] and that this frame of reference is what constitutes an ideology. Since ideology guides practice, an understanding of the child savers' ideology is essential to a total understanding of their work. Chapter four will describe the actual practice of the Department of Neglected Children in Alberta and chapter five will provide the conclusions reached as a result of this study. The conclusions will be organized around the two main theoretical positions of a social control analysis.

At this stage it should be noted that the organizational structure adopted in this thesis (material conditions in chapter two, ideology in chapter three, and practice in chapter four) has been done so for practical reasons. The author does not wish to imply that these three components exist in isolation from one another. Rather it is clearly recognized that material conditions, ideology and practice are interconnected; that is, theory guides practice but practice modifies theory and both are inextricably related to the material conditions in a society.

This thesis, through its examination of child welfare schemes in Alberta prior to 1929, marks a beginning in filling an obvious void in Canadian social history. It is to be hoped that this initial study will be followed by many others for, as Cunningham has pointed out, an understanding of the past is impossible "unless we attempt to realize the precise problems of each age and the success or failure which attended human efforts to grapple with them".[28]

Footnotes - Chapter One

[1]Alberta, An Act for the Protection of Neglected and Dependent Children, 1909, 9 Edward VII, C. 12, Statutes of Alberta, 206-217.

[2]Elizabeth Fee, "The Sexual Politics of Victorian Social Anthropology," in Clio's Consciousness Raised, eds. Mary Hartman and Lois W. Banner (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1974), p. 86.

[3]J.M.S. Careless, "Frontierism, Metropolitanism, and Canadian History," Canadian Historical Review XXXV (March, 1954): 1-21; Carl Berger, The Writing of Canadian History, Aspects of English - Canadian Historical Writing: 1900-1970 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976).

[4]Herbert Buttfield, The Whig Interpretation of History (New York: Scribner, 1963).

[5]C.E. Phillips, The Development of Education in Canada (Toronto: Gage Publishing, 1957).

[6]Bernard Bailyn, Education in the Forming of American Society (New York: Vintage Books, 1960), p. 14.

[7]See, for example, the collection of essays in J. Donald Wilson, Robert M. Stamp, and Louis-Philippe Audet, eds., Canadian Education: A History (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1970).

[8]Gregory S. Kealey and Peter Warrian, eds., Essays in Working Class History (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1976), p. 8.

[9]E.J. Hobsbawm, "From Social History to the History of Society," Daedalus 100 (Winter, 1971): 25.

[10]The best example of his work in this area is his recent book. Michael Katz, The People of Hamilton, Canada West: Family and Class in a Nineteenth Century City (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975).

[11]Alison L. Prentice and Susan E. Houston, eds., Family, School and Society in Nineteenth Century Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1975), p. 5.

[12]Philippe Ariès, Centuries of Childhood (New York: Vintage Books, 1962).

[13]Quoted in John Kenneth Galbraith, The Age of Uncertainty (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1977), p. 56.

[14]Ibid., p. 45.

[15]Neil Sutherland, Children in English-Canadian Society (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976), pp. 21-21.

[16]Richard Hofstadter, ed., The Progressive Movement, 1900-1915 (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1963), p. 3.

[17]Typical studies include Joseph Hawes, Children in Urban Society: Juvenile Delinquency in Nineteenth Century America (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971); Robert M. Mennel, Thorns and Thistles: Juvenile Delinquents in the United States, 1825-1940 (Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 1973); Anthony M. Platt, The Child Savers: The Invention of Delinquency (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969); Oscar and Mary F. Handlin, Facing Life: Youth and the Family in American History (Boston: Little, Brown, 1971); Jack M. Holl, Juvenile Reform in the Progressive Era (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1971).

[18]Richard Allen, The Social Passion: Religion and Social Reform in Canada 1914-28 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971); Paul Rutherford, ed., Saving the Canadian City: The First Phase, 1880-1920 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974); Veronica Strong-Boag, "'Setting the Stage': National Organization and the Women's Movement in the Late Nineteenth Century," in The Neglected Majority: Essays in Canadian Women's History, eds. Susan Mann Trofimenkoff and Alison Prentice (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1977); Richared Splane, Social Welfare in Ontario 1791-1893 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965); Fingard, "Attitudes Towards the Education of the Poor in Colonial Halifax," Acadiensis II (Spring, 1973): 15-42; Susan Houston, "Victorian Origins of Juvenile Delinquency: A Canadian Experience," History of Education Quarterly XII (Fall, 1972): 254-280; T.R. Morrison, "The Child and Urban Social Reform in Late Nineteenth Century Ontario," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Toronto, 1971); Sutherland, Children.

[19]Sutherland, Children.

[20]Ibid., pp. 142-144.

[21]Gordon Leff, History and Social Theory (University, Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1969), p. 4.

[22]Platt, The Child Savers.

[23]Alberta, Department of Neglected Children, Annual Reports, 1909, 1912-1929. In 1911 a Biennial Report was issued for the years 1910 and 1911. These reports will be cited hereafter as AR.

[24]V.A.C. Gatrell and T.B. Hadden, "Criminal Statistics and their Interpretation," in Nineteenth Century Society: Essays in the Use of Quantitative Methods for the Study of Social Data, ed. E.A. Wrigley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), pp. 336-396.

[25]Philip Stewart, "Towards a History of Childhood," History of Education Quarterly XII (Summer, 1972): 209.

[26]David Livingstone, "On Hegemony in Corporate Capitalist States: Material Structures, Ideological Forms, Class Consciousness and Hegemonic Acts," Sociological Inquiry 46 (1976): 235-250.

[27]Leff, History and Social Theory, p. 155

[28]Quoted in H.J. Perkin, "Social History," in Approaches to History, ed. H.P.R. Finberg (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962), pp. 51-82.

CHAPTER TWO

MATERIAL CONDITIONS IN ALBERTA, 1909-1929

Karl Mannheim, like many others, has pointed out that "human thought arises, and operates, not in a social vacuum but in a definite social milieu."[1] The author shares this view and thus contends that the study of the developing material conditions of life in Alberta from 1909 to 1929 must be an essential component of any effort to interpret the ideology and practice of the child savers. While the task of outlining these material conditions is made most difficult by the appalling scarcity of scholarly research in the field, an attempt will be made to outline those demographic and economic aspects of Alberta society which are considered critical to an understanding of child saving.

When Alberta became a province in 1905 that move was almost taken for granted by the citizens of the area because they were so preoccupied with its astonishing growth. So, at least, claims Lewis G. Thomas in pointing out that by the late nineties "the tempo of prairie settlement began to change and the west, in common with Canada as a whole moved into a phase of rapid development."[2] Certainly even a cursory view of the statistics on population growth reveals a most rapid growth rate prior to World War I although after about 1913 growth fell off markedly until by the middle 1920's it had become minimal (see table 1).

TABLE 1

POPULATION GROWTH IN ALBERTA

1901 - 1926

Year	Total Pop.	Increase over previous census number	% increase
1901	73,022	-	-
1906	185,195	112,173	153.62
1911	374,295	189,100	102.11
1916	496,442	122,147	32.63
1921	588,454	92,012	18.53
1926	607,599	19,145	8.25

Source: Canada, D.B.S., Census of the Prairie Provinces, 1926. (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1931).

Despite the influx of a large number of immigrants from Europe, Alberta was consistently a province dominated by those who were Canadian or British in origin (see Table 2).

TABLE 2

ORIGIN OF ALBERTA'S POPULATION

1911-1931

Year	Per Cent Canadian Born	Per Cent British Born	Per Cent Foreign Born, incl. U.S.A.
1911	43.25	18.61	38.13
1921	53.55	16.88	29.56
1931	58.21	14.86	26.92

Source: Canada, D.B.S., "Racial Origins and Nativity of the Canadian People," by W. Burton Hurd, Seventh Census of Canada, 1931: Monographs, Vol. 12. (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1942)

Of the Albertans who were Canadian born, the vast majority came to this province from Ontario. In 1911, for example, 88,424 people in Alberta had been born in other provinces. Of this number 65 per cent had been born in Ontario.[3] Of the Albertans who were born outside Canada, Great Britain and her possessions, the largest number came from the United States. In 1911, 21.74 per cent of Alberta's population was American in origin, in 1921 this had dropped to 16.97 per cent and 1931 showed a further drop to 10.79 per cent. For the same years, 1911, 1921 and 1931, the respective percentage figures for Albertans born in north-western Europe were 6.36 per cent, 4.53 per cent and 5.05 per cent. For south east and central Europe the figures were 9.21 per cent, 7.26 per cent and 10.31 per cent.

Where did the newcomers settle? Consistently more than half lived in the rural areas although the urban population grew at a more rapid rate than the rural (see table 3). The growth of Alberta's two major cities was nothing less than phenomenal. Between 1901 and 1911 Calgary's population increased from 4,392 to 43,704, a growth rate of 893.72 per cent while Edmonton's increased from 2,626 to 24,900, a growth rate of 895.08 per cent.[5] In the next decade Calgary's population increased by another 19,601 people and Edmonton's by 27,757, growth rates of 44.85 per cent and 89.35 per cent respectively. It should be noted that a portion of Edmonton's growth can be accounted for by the annexation of Strathcona in 1912.[6] Although there is some evidence to show that both Edmonton and Calgary

experienced a population decrease between 1914 and 1916, this setback was a temporary one.[7]

TABLE 3

POPULATION DISTRIBUTION IN ALBERTA
1901-1926

	Number		Per Cent		Increase Over Last Census	
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
1901	54,489	18,533	74.62	25.38	-	-
1906	127,320	57,875	68.75	31.25	133.66%	212.28%
1911	236,633	137,662	63.22	36.22	85.88%	137.86%
1916	307,693	188,749	61.98	38.02	30.03%	37.11%
1921	365.550	222.904	62.12	37.88	18.80%	18.10%
1926	373,751	233,848	61.51	38.49	2.24%	4.91%

Source: Canada, D.B.S., Census of the Prairie Provinces, 1926. (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1931)

Of the total population, 55 per cent to 60 per cent were male in each five year period between 1901 and 1926 and more than 50 per cent were consistently 19 years of age and under (see table 4). While accurate information for the period prior to 1921 is not available, after that year birth rates and death rates generally declined and age expectancy increased.[8] Infant mortality, however, fluctuated from year to year in the 1920's but was always lower than the national average. Infant mortality in Edmonton and Calgary was less than in the province as a whole. The maternal death rate also fluctuated but was consistently higher than the Canadian average.[9]

TABLE 4

Alberta's Population By Sex and Age

	No. Of Males	No. Of Females	Total Pop.	% 19 Years Of Age Or Less
1901	41,019	32,003	73,022	63.58
1906	108,156	77,039	185,195	57.52
1911	223,792	150,503	374,295	54.05
1916	277,210	219,232	496,442	57.69
1921	324,208	264,246	588,454	57.98
1926	331,123	276,476	607,599	56.61

Source: Canada, D.B.S., Census of the Prairie Provinces, 1926 (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1931).

The number of families in Alberta increased rapidly particularly between 1901 and 1911 when a 450.86 per cent increase from 16,401 to 90,346 families was experienced. In the next ten years the number of families grew to 141,190, a 56.28 per cent increase. The average number of persons per family was 4.45 in 1901, 4.14 in 1911 and 4.17 in 1921. The number of families was always larger than the number of dwellings indicating a continuing housing problem.[10]

In summary, Alberta experienced a rapid surge of growth prior to World War I particularly in the cities although the rural population continued to outnumber the urban. While immigrants arrived from many countries, the English-speaking peoples predominated in a population that could be termed "young". The majority of people who

moved to the province lived in family situations so that Alberta, even in its earliest years as a province, was not a frontier dominated by young, single men. Indeed, the evidence supports Lower's contention that "the prairie West got over its youthful measles relatively soon, and a stable society reflecting the East emerged."[11]

Despite its newness, Alberta's society was still a class society. Careless, in discussing the new cities of the west, notes that there was no upsurge in democracy but simply a repetition of the elitism of the older eastern cities.[12] Both Edmonton and Calgary had their own elitist in-group who "took the decisions" that shaped both their cities and ultimately the province. Careless describes this group as a "relatively small, development-oriented circle" of major businessmen.[13]

Where did these businessmen make their money? Voisey[14] argues that the growth of Alberta's towns and cities was the visible effect of the economic response to the rapid settlement of rural areas. The rapid settlement created the need for distributing centres and shipping points and this allowed for urbanization. Careless makes the point that from the start the critical aspect of city growth was the link with the "steam-and-steel technology of transport"[15] while Thomas[16] expands this suggestion to note that the settlement of the west, both in the urban and rural areas, depended on the railway. While the Canadian Pacific Railway had reached Calgary in 1883, the new era of railway building early in this century gave added impetus to the development of urban centres in the northern half of the province. In 1906, for example, Edmonton

had only two wholesale firms while by 1911 the number had risen to nearly fifty.[17] Voisey notes that the cities housed a variety of industrial activities, too, including flour mills, meat packing plants, food processing plants and factories which manufactured certain commodities. Between 1901 and 1911 the value of manufactured goods in Calgary rose from $.6 million to $7.8 million and in Edmonton from $.2 million to $4.5 million. In Edmonton from 1905 to 1910 the value of the annual trade increased from $3 million to $10 million.[18]

The urban work force in 1911 broke down in the following way. Twenty-five per cent were employed in professional or service jobs, 20 per cent in trade and merchandising, 20 per cent in building construction, 15 per cent in railway transport, 15 per cent in manufacturing and 5 per cent in finance.[19] This gives some idea of the extent of the diversification in the cities' economies.

In addition to the economic activity already discussed, both Edmonton and Calgary experienced a real estate boom in the years from about 1909-1913. And, of course, would-be farmers were taking up land throughout the province so that by the outbreak of the war "most of the readily accessible homestead land in Alberta was occupied"[20] and the big move to a wheat economy had begun. It was during this time, too, that Alberta benefitted from the investment of foreign capital.

In the first dozen years of this century both the Canadian and the Albertan economies were booming. By 1913, however, a recession was setting in and the outbreak of war in 1914 "fell with particular violence upon a society that was still immature and already suffering from the strains of recession."[21]

Economically speaking in the short run the war benefitted the farmers as prices for farm produce began to rise. This encouraged many farmers to expand rapidly, often onto land that was marginal in productive value. As a result, farmers assumed a large burden of debt that was to prove extremely onerous when farm prices fell as they did shortly after the war ended. Because of the great demand for foodstuffs, however, the "position of the prairies as the great export region was consolidated and dependence on wheat was accentuated"[22] during the war.

After the war, despite a brief period of uncertainty, the boom period continued but by the spring of 1920 a downswing in the economy had begun. The price of wheat dropped and the Canadian economy as a whole slowed down. By the second half of 1921, however, a general recovery was under way and the economy was to remain fairly buoyant until the late 1920's.[23] Fluctuations in prices occurred as they nearly always do in a highly specialized agricultural economy but the general trend was towards stabilization.

To this point we have discussed material conditions in an abstract and general way. It is now time to look at these same circumstances in terms of what they must have meant to human beings, to the people who lived in Alberta. Unfortunately this task is made extremely difficult by the complete absence of any reputable and scholarly social histories of Alberta. In their absence the best that can be accomplished is the suggestion of certain possibilities with respect to the social conditions of the time.

In the final analysis, the most basic physical needs of human beings are food, clothing and shelter. Whether these needs are being adequately met is a critical aspect of the human social condition not only with respect to physical survival but also with respect to the avoidance of anomie and alienation. We have already mentioned that the number of families in Alberta grew at a more rapid pace than the number of dwellings. MacGregor[24] reports that on August 30, 1912 in Edmonton people were sleeping in the Granite Curling Club and in some temporary school buildings and at least 2,671 newcomers were camped in tents on the river flats. At least these people may have come to the cities filled with a spirit of optimism that buoyed them up through this experience.

Two years later, after the early boom had broken, the unemployed gathered in the cities. Those who formed this in-migration were probably disillusioned with the new life in the west and understandably less inclined to think "positively" about their situation. But for whatever reason people congregated in the cities, the essential fact is that "There they are and there they stay; and this is what counts in the present and for the future."[25]

The rapid concentration of people in the cities undoubtedly strained the resources of those cities to the limits. The problems of providing this rapidly growing population with the necessities of life, medical care and other services could only have presented an organizational nightmare. For people forced to live in a tent, a shack or a room with a dozen others, it meant that cleanliness and privacy were nearly impossible to achieve. Overcrowding, inadequate

heating and sanitary facilities, became facts of life. In many cases the family income was marginal and because much of the work in Alberta was seasonal in nature unemployment, and hence no income at all, was a constant threat. Even the average wage rate did not keep pace with the cost of living, particularly during the inflationary period of the First World War.[26] For those who earned a below average wage, the difficulties must have appeared insurmountable. Additionally, during the war years, the women were left behind, often forever, to cope with the problems of children and poverty in a new land.

It ought, of course, to be noted that not all people experienced the conditions outlined above. Well-to-do businessmen, doctors, lawyers and others of the middle class did not generally suffer the consequences of poverty in the same way that the working class did; that is, they did not experience it in a first-hand and personal way. Some members of the middle class, however, perceived the effects of rapid urbanization in much the same way that the well-known Canadian sociologist, S.D. Clark, describes them. Clark claims that the new conditions of life in the city led to strains on family organization, especially for the immigrants, that the break-down of neighbourhood controls led to increased sexual license and that the low wages paid in marginal industries and service occupations demoralized people. These results were evident, he says, "in the increase of desertion, illegitimacy, and prostitution."[27]

Those who held a view on "social disorganization" similar to Clark's were, of course, the social reformers who had come to Alberta from Ontario along with everyone else. The Ontario migrants, described

as "sons of substantial farmers looking for land, not fun, small townsmen with respectability in their souls, young doctors, lawyers, and clergymen...",[28] were exactly of that group which contributed to Ontario society what Morrison has termed "the archetype reformer."[29] In Alberta a similar contribution was made in the person of Emily Murphy, Nellie McClung and others. And just as in Ontario, the child saving movement was centred in the cities so, too, was it in Alberta.

While rural groups such as the United Farm Women of Alberta were interested in child-saving, this was only one of their many concerns. Those whose primary concern was child-saving lived in the urban centres and worked through the Department of Neglected Children which was centred in Edmonton and the Children's Aid Societies which were located in the four largest cities. The Children's Shelters and other ancillary agencies such as the Beulah Home and the Good Shepherd Home were also located in urban centres. Thus child saving work was most intense in the cities and the leaders of the movement were, for the most part, urban-based.

It cannot be argued that the material conditions in Alberta were responsible for the initiation of a philosophy of social reform. Rather, because many of the conditions in Alberta's cities replicated those in Ontario's cities, the social reform ethos which settlers brought to Alberta was given the impetus to grow here, too. The passage of The Children's Protection Act and the subsequent establishment of a Department of Neglected Children was one of the concrete manifestations of this process.

Footnotes - Chapter Two

[1]Karl Mannheim, Ideology and Utopia, trans. Louis Wirth and Edward Shils (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1936), p. 80.

[2]Lewis G. Thomas, gen. ed., The Prairie West to 1905 (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1975), p. 8.

[3]Alberta, Department of Economic Affairs, Alberta's Economic Prospects, 1955, p. 21.

[4]Canada, D.B.S., "Racial Origins and Nativity of the Canadian People," by W. Burton Hurd, Seventh Census of Canada, 1931: Monographs, Vol. 12 (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1942), pp. 537-828.

[5]Canada, D.B.S., Fifth Census of Canada, 1911. Vol. III (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1912), p. 531. The increase for Calgary is listed as 848.21% but this figure is a miscalculation and should be 895.08%.

[6]Canada, D.B.S., Census of the Prairie Provinces, 1926 (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1931).

[7]James G. MacGregor, A History of Alberta (Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers, 1972), p. 234; Paul Voisey, "The Urbanization of the Canadian Prairies 1871-1916," Histoire Sociale/Social History 8 (May, 1975): 97.

[8]Daniel Kubat and David Thornton, A Statistical Profile of Canadian Society (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Limited, 1974).

[9]Canada, D.B.S., The Canada Year Book, 1930 (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1930).

[10]Canada, D.B.S., The Canada Year Book, 1926 (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1926).

[11]A.R.M. Lower, Canadians in the Making (Toronto: Longmans Canada Ltd., 1958), p. 360.

[12]J.M.S. Careless, "Aspects of Urban Life in the West, 1870-1914," in The Canadian City: Essays in Urban History, eds. Gilbert A. Stelter and Alan F.J. Artibise (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1977), p. 136.

[13]Ibid., pp. 134-135.

[14]Voisey, "The Urbanization of the Canadian Prairies."

[15]Careless, "Aspects of Urban Life," p. 127.

[16]Thomas, ed., Prairie West.

[17]Careless, "Aspects of Urban Life," p. 130.

[18]Voisey, "The Urbanization of the Canadian Prairies."

[19]Ibid.

[20]Alberta, Department of Economic Affairs, Alberta's Economic Prospects, 1955, p. 33.

[21]Thomas, ed., Prairie West, pp. 12-13.

[22]A.E. Safarian, The Canadian Economy in the Great Depression (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1970), p. 28.

[23]Ibid., pp. 27-31.

[24]MacGregor, A History of Alberta, p. 219.

[25]Louis Chevalier, Labouring Classes and Dangerous Classes, trans. Frank Jellinek (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1973), p. 168.

[26]Unemployment information based on statistics in Canada D.B.S., Sixth Census of Canada, 1921, vol. III (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1927).

[27]S.D. Clark, The Social Development of Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1942), p. 386.

[28]Lower, Canadians, p. 361.

[29]Morrison, "The Child and Urban Social Reform," p. 81.

CHAPTER THREE

THE IDEOLOGY OF THE CHILD SAVERS

One of the most significant aspects of human activity is man's struggle to understand the world around him. In seeking to explain the world, men create belief systems which are characterized by real attempts to achieve universal and rational interpretations of reality. We call these belief systems, these subjective interpretations of objective conditions, ideologies. As Lefebvre points out, ideologies seek to provide a means to answer all questions and problems. In doing so ideologies "create a comprehensive view of the world" but coincidentally "they reinforce specific ways of life, behaviour patterns, 'values'...."[1] The way we see the world and understand our position in it determines to a large extent the way we behave and the institutions we develop. Thus, in order to understand the work of the child savers in Alberta, we must examine their ideology. This chapter will emphasize their "comprehensive world view", their basic understanding of human existence and experience. While this belief system will implicitly suggest the "way of life", "behaviour patterns", and "values" that the social reformers were upholding, these specific aspects are more accurately reflected in their practice and consequently will be dealt with more fully in chapter four.

As has been indicated earlier, the Superintendents of Neglected Children tended to be the main spokesmen for the child saving movement in Alberta. Their positions are outlined in the Annual Reports of their Department. Additionally, others who were very active in the movement enunciated the reformers' position in their writings and in their public speeches. The most notable examples of this latter type were Emily Murphy and Nellie McClung. It is to the extant documents written by these social reformers that we must turn for an understanding of their ideology.

Before doing, this, however, it should be stated quite unequivocally that the ideology of Alberta's reformers was not unique or unusual. Their ideas did not arise nor develop in isolation, nor were they confined to the borders of this province. Rather social reformism must be seen as a trans-national, nay international, movement. This case has been variously argued by Rutherford, Hareven and Sutherland[2] although with a varying degree of emphasis on the extent to which ideas from the United States and Great Britain were borrowed and modified. The general consensus seems to reflect the opinion that while Canadians borrowed many ideas and practices, especially from the United States, they "added their own modifications and inventions"[3] and "stressed the need for a frame of reference and resources geared to Canadian conditions."[4] The Alberta example upholds the argument that Canadians were great borrowers. R.B. Chadwick, Alberta's first Superintendent of Neglected Children, specifically acknowledges the province's indebtedness to a wide variety of sources in his Annual Reports of 1909 and 1912.[5] In the 1909 Report he mentions the contributions of

the United States, Australia and Germany and in the 1912 Report he adds France, Scotland, Great Britain, Norway, Sweden and Austria to the list.

Within the country as a whole, Rutherford claims, a small group of central Canadians were mainly responsible for articulating the theories and tactics of social reform.[6] While this contention must certainly be true for the 1880-1900 period, it surely overstates the case for the next twenty year period when westerners such as J.S. Woodsworth became actively involved in the social reform movement. It could be argued that the western reformers generally had their roots in Ontario and consequently reflected the position developed in Ontario. This is, of course, true to some extent but though the reformers retained the basic ideological stance of reformism, it would be wrong to think that the western experience did nothing to modify the theory and practice which had been developed to meet conditions in Ontario. If Canadians selected one idea from here and one idea from there to construct a child welfare system that they knew was superior, as Sutherland[7] suggests, then Albertans, at least, exhibited that same smug attitude towards Ontario's system. Ontario's system was good but Alberta's was better.[8]

In the final analysis, however, the source of the ideas of reformism is not as important as the fact that the ideas were being disseminated and shared. We have already mentioned that the ideology came to Alberta with some of those who moved here from Ontario. The best example of this phenomenon is R.B. Chadwick who brought to Alberta a less than narrow range of experience. Prior to his arrival in the province he had been Assistant Secretary of the Boys'

Club in New York from 1898 to 1900 and Secretary of the Boys' Department of the Young Men's Christian Association in Toronto from 1900 to 1905. In Edmonton he acted as General Secretary of the Y.M.C.A. from 1906 to 1907[9] prior to assuming the post of Superintendent of Industrial Schools, a position that was enlarged in 1909 to the one of Superintendent of Neglected Children. Because of his work in New York and Ontario, it is reasonable to assume that he brought reform sentiments from these areas with him.

Chadwick retained and enlarged his contacts with social reformers in North America and Europe once he settled in Alberta. He corresponded with child savers around the world, toured North America visiting many child care institutions, regularly attended social welfare conferences, and sat on the executives of various national and international organization. By 1913 he was Vice President of the American Prison Association and Assistant Secretary of the Canadian Conference Charter and Correction[10] and in 1914 he sat on the national council of the Canadian Welfare League[11] along with such notables as J.S. Woodsworth. The network of contacts Chadwick established was maintained by both his successors who continued to attend conferences in both Canada and the United States, often presenting papers while there. Additionally, Alberta hosted visiting reformers. For example, in 1909, J.J. Kelso, the well-known Superintendent of Neglected Children in Ontario, visited Alberta.[12] In 1918, the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Conference of Public Welfare was held in Edmonton[13] and in 1922, C.C. Carstens, Director of the Child Welfare League of America, spoke to the Annual Conference of the Department of Neglected Children.[14]

At this stage it is difficult to assess whether Albertans were contributing any ideas of consequence to the national reform movement at least with respect to child saving. Certainly the basic concepts had been established in the years before the west was opened, and the activity of the 1900-1930 period in Canada generally centred around practical considerations. It is reasonably safe to say that when the reformers came to Alberta they brought their basic ideological baggage with them. Because of this and their continual efforts to maintain contacts with the East and the United States, Albertans shared, with other North American reformers, a similar view of the world that appropriately may be labelled their ideology.

Morrison has claimed that the ideology of the Canadian social reformer was "a very general and loosely-knit social outlook rather than a detailed precise social philosophy."[15] Given the wide range of concerns and the different groups of people who are subsumed under the rubric "social reform movement" this is not surprising. But Hofstadter is right when he claims that historians must look not only at the particulars but also at "certain general tendencies, certain widespread commitments of belief" which, in the end, "outweigh the particulars."[16] It is this general set of beliefs about the world that enables us to talk about the social reform movement in the way we do.

At its most basic level, any ideology will seek to answer two fundamental questions. These are "What is the nature of human nature?" and "What is the purpose of life?". How these two questions are answered, particularly by the ruling interests in a society, has vast implications not only for the institutions people create but

for their whole way of life. In fact, under these two broad philosophical questions we can subsume nearly every question man has asked and answered about his own existence. Of necessity we must limit the nature and number of sub-questions we consider in this chapter. Because our primary concern is with child saving, we will try to discover the reformers' views on human nature and the purpose of life with particular reference to the child and the family. It should be noted from the start that the Canadian social reformers were not given to ponderous, abstruse and convoluted philosophical arguments. They were more inclined to practical, down-to-earth common-sense explanations and rationalizations which could be quickly stretched or modified to cover all situations. Just as they borrowed widely for their specific child saving work, so, too, they combined a wide variety of bits and pieces from a number of European intellectual traditions into their own peculiar ideological stance.

Nowhere is this more evident than in their answer to the question "What is human nature?". Unlike the nineteenth century evangelical who saw the child as needing redemption, twentieth century reformers viewed the child as a redeemer, the hope of the future.[17] They saw the child's "human nature" as good, loving and innocent, not sinful, evil and willful. This optimistic attitude towards human beings had broad implications. It meant that the reformers believed in the perfectability of man and his society. They believed that life had meaning and value in the present world and that people were entitled to certain inalienable rights in both the material and political realms. They were humanists who believed in progress and the ability of man to make the world a better place.

Nellie McClung expressed this position well when she said

> Humanity can do anything it wants to do. There is no limit to human achievement. Whoever declares that things cannot be done which are for the betterment of the race, insults the Creator of us all, who is not willing that any should perish, but that all should live and live abundantly.[18]

This quotation also illustrates the synthesis that the social reformers had effected between their Christian beliefs and evolutionary theory. For them, evolutionary theory guaranteed the perfectability of man. If the law of natural selection was applied to "moral history", the result was, as the American child saver Charles Loring Brace pointed out, that "Evil must die ultimately as the weaker element, in the struggle with the good."[19] Thus science confirmed the reformers in their approach to social problems. Progress and human improvement were inevitable so those who put into practice the Christian ethic of "love thy neighbour" were merely following the natural order of things.

Because the reformers believed in progress and perfectability, and adopted an optimistic view of mankind, it seemed necessary for them to reject the nineteenth century view that crime, delinquency, immorality and insanity existed because children inherited these traits from their parents. On the issue of heredity versus environment, these reformers opted for environment. "Environment is such a positive, such a strong thing, that it whips heredity out of the ring,"[20] claimed the writer of one article in 1910. Human beings were not born bad; they were made bad by youthful experiences in an inappropriate environment. Thus if poor environmental conditions caused children to grow up to become "vagabonds, criminals or dependent on their fellow citizens", the solution to this problem was to be found in improving the conditions of society. If childhood was neglected, the State was bound "to

pay the penalty in dependents and criminal misfits".[21] The "children of today" were seen as "the citizens of tomorrow" and thus their upbringing was a matter of critical concern to those who sought to make "a heaven here on earth." Because they saw the future of society being shaped by the experiences of children in the present, the reformers concerned themselves with the children whose rearing they felt was inadequate. These were the "neglected" children, the children whose family life provided them with a "poor home environment" and thus turned them to a life of crime and dependency.

To explain society's problems the reformers looked to the family and tried to discover why some parents would abuse and neglect their children. Urban life was blamed in a general way for family difficulties. Chadwick claimed that the "tendency of all life to become urban has its effects upon the contributory streams of neglect, delinquency or crime."[22] It was urban life that created bad housing and poor home conditions among the poor and this led to "an atmosphere of crime and immorality...."[23]

What these poor home conditions were had been explained by Chadwick in his 1909 report. His list of the "Most Prominent Defects of the Average Bad Home" was extensive.

1. Poor parental oversight
2. Ignorance of laws of health
3. Lack of attention to physical defects
4. Lack of insistence on school attendance
5. Desire to make child contribute to family income
6. Lack of moral or religious training
7. Lack of supervision of companionship
8. Lack of example of industry and thrift[24]

One presumes that the converse of these statements would indicate the characteristics of the "average good home" and, indeed,

this is the case. Chadwick mentions the following conditions as typical of the good family home: "physical health, industrial training, normal social environment, rooted affections and virtues, access to the avenues of success."[25] A.M. McDonald was more explicit in his explanation of the good home. He claimed that there is "an irreducible minimum to which every child is entitled." This minimum included sufficient and wholesome food, decent and comfortable clothing, and a shelter that was sanitary, had good plumbing and was well-ventilated. In addition, the moral atmosphere of the home had to be of a high level.[26] After all, said McDonald real social reformers

> ...know that the whole social fabric suffers from bad homes, which are as great cancers, eating into the vitals of society. They know also that a good home "is as a well-spring of life to the morals of the people."[27]

One of the main reasons many reformers worked for temperance laws, for example, lay in their feeling that alcohol abuse was ruinous to a stable family situation. In Ontario, J. George Hodgins estimated that "nine-tenths of the sorrow of waif-life are brought about by the demon of drink."[28] In 1916, A.M. McDonald had this to say about the positive effects of Prohibition in Alberta. Because of Prohibition "many families who a year ago were living in a state of absolute poverty, are to-day in comparative comfort." McDonald noted that the money that was once spent on alcohol "is now used in procuring groceries, clothing, boots and shoes."[29]

Poverty, too, was seen as a destructive influence on the family. In some cases "loose" or idle parents were blamed for the deprivation of the family but often poverty was seen as the result of conditions over which poor people had no control.[30] In 1913

Chadwick claimed that the high incidence of disease, crime, pauperism and child neglect was due to poor housing and crowded conditions "caused by people being compelled to economize on living space owing to exorbitant rents...."[31] Chadwick further noted that in most of the cases dealt with by his Department people were perfectly willing to remedy the objectionable conditions of their home life provided they had the financial means to do so. McDonald adopted a position similar to Chadwick's in 1918 when he pointed out that wages were not increasing but the cost of necessities was soaring. As a result many parents could not feed or clothe their children properly nor provide medical care. Parents were "simply forced to deprive their children of the ordinary necessities."[32]

Given this view of poverty we can understand why it was not seen as a sufficient reason for removing children from their homes. In fact, so strongly did the reformers feel about the sanctity of the family that one of the main tenets of their social welfare philosophy was the preservation of the child's natural home if at all possible. Apprehending children and making them wards of the government was seen as the last step to be taken. Providing support and advice to a family in distress, helping them over the rough spots, was the preferred approach.

Chadwick notes that when his Department had to deal with cases of child neglect caused by poverty, every attempt was made to secure work for the parents and the older children. If the poverty was due to illness on the part of the wage earner, then temporary relief was provided for the family.[33] McDonald's stand was similar

when he claimed

> ...if financial aid is needed, it is the State's duty to provide not merely to keep bodies alive, but to develop children into useful men and women; that as a normal proposition, this can be done better through homes than by any other device.[34]

The support and maintenance of the family was considered particularly important in the city because it was there that children could be easily led astray. Consequently they required the close supervision and guidance of interested parents who would protect their children from the wide array of bad influences which would only encourage the young in bad habits. Commonly cited bad influences from which children had to be kept were intoxicants, tobacco, drugs, sex, bad associates, bad literature, cheap theatres and sensational posters. If they were not protected from these influences they would turn to gambling, loafing, dishonesty and the street life which would do little, it was said, to teach the young a worthwhile trade.[35]

In opposition to the life of degradation and sin to be found in the city, we find Alberta's early reformers enamoured of the country life. Typical of the view we might term rural romanticism was this one expressed by Nellie McClung.

> We all know that the country is the best place in which to bring up children; that the freckle-faced boy, with bare feet, who hunts up the cows after school, and has to keep the woodbox full, and has to remember to shut the henhouse door, is getting a far better education than the carefree city boy who has everything done for him.[36]

One cannot help but notice that, in this quotation, what is seen as the critical difference between the rural and urban life is the chance rural children have to do some useful work. Furthermore,

claimed Chadwick, "rural districts offer less temptations for going wrong than do urban districts."[37]

In analyzing the arguments presented by the social reformers on the evils of city life, it becomes clear that they did not oppose urbanization and growth per se but rather some of the conditions that they saw resulting from urbanization. Because they saw Canada as a nation which was constantly progressing and improving and because these trends were closely associated with industrialization and urbanization, they were reluctant to criticize these developments. They concentrated instead on the quality of the home situation, feeling that a strengthened home life would be enough to combat the ill-effects arising out of the changing economic and social circumstances. This tension between progress and tradition was a difficult one to maintain and the reformers often had difficulty reconciling the two.

Whatever specific reason reformers saw as causing child neglect, whether it was poverty, bad housing, intemperance, the illicit pleasures of the city or a combination of these, they did agree that a child's environment was ultimately responsible for making him/her into one kind of adult or another. The innate goodness of children stood little chance in a corrupt and evil environment because each child was a creature of impressions, a reflection of the environment. At each of the three stages of life a child's surroundings were important although for different reasons. Chadwick, like many of his contemporaries, appears to have been influenced by the ideas of earlier European developmentalists like Pestalozzi, Herbart and Froebel in the explanation he offered

of the particular relationship between child development and a satisfactory home life.

Childhood was seen to have three stages. The first eight years of life, said Chadwick, were marked by an absolute dependency on adults and the child simply reflected the home. If the home was good, then ipso facto, the child would be good. The second period of childhood occurred between the ages of nine and thirteen. It was at this stage, Chadwick felt, that the child was learning habits and morals by imitation. Thus it was important that wholesome adult models be available to the child. The third stage of childhood was from the age of thirteen to the age of seventeen and this period, warned the Superintendent, was fraught with danger. Chadwick quotes freely from the works of G. Stanley Hall to show that adolescence is filled with emotional upset, that this is the impulsive age. In explaining adolescence Chadwick said

> During this period the child is up against the most serious time of its life. Rapid physical and mental growth, lack of knowledge of how to conduct itself under new conditions and circumstances, the ambitions and desires of men and women with the experience of children to carry them through this trying time, are but a few of the many trials to which the child is subjected.[38]

Furthermore, while the religious impulse was considered to be strong at this age so was the tendency towards criminal behaviour. If firm and loving parents neglected to correct incorrigibility, the child would become a criminal for life.

Given this view of child development, it is not difficult to see how the reformers answered the question "What is human nature?". Children were born good, innocent and loving but they became debased because of the imperfections in the environment. Thus it followed

that if the environment could be improved, children would be raised in good and honest citizenship and the world would be a better place. The reformers accepted the typical middle-class family as the ideal environment and based the rest of their ideology on that assumption. This meant that children and families which did not meet certain material and moral pre-conditions were judged to be in need of reformation.

This leads us to the examination of another fundamental question, "What is the purpose of life?" The reformers' answer to this question was exceedingly vague and was most often couched in homilies such as "good citizenship". The reformers assumed that the basic structure of society was sound and that their main task was to ensure that all children became "good citizens". However, vague and over-generalized this purpose might appear, the child savers did give some indication of their definition of the term.

Chadwick said

> ...if a child is to grow into a normal citizen, it must learn self-help; that it must develop a fertile resourcefulness, in order to meet on an equal basis other children in the battle of life, moreover, the child must develop the desire for home ties which will result in its becoming a settled citizen with a circle of helpful friends.[39]

Further indication of what this "settled citizen" meant is revealed when Chadwick explains what happens when the wages earned by foster children are deposited in bank accounts under the children's names.

> ...the result is frequently so encouraging to a delinquent child that ambition is awakened and the boys and girls learn that they are producers, and as such take a pride in their work and in their own future prospects.[40]

The Superintendent further claimed that it was a child's duty in life to be a good citizen, to learn the rules and laws governing

life. Clearly the ideal citizen was settled, ambitious, law-abiding and productive. Chadwick's successor, A.M. McDonald, reveals a similar view of what he called "useful citizenship" in this statement.

> Our phenomenal natural assets would be of little value, however, if it were not for a race of honest, industrious men and women, who, by their ingenuity and enterprise, take things in their crude, undeveloped state and turn them into comforts and luxuries for the world.[41]

The reformers, while they favoured individual industriousness and enterprise, tended to view the world in collective terms rather than individual ones. They stressed co-operation, not conflict. McDonald claimed one of the most vital lessons of life was learning "how to live in company with other people."[42] Nellie McClung, well known reformer, said

> ...it is not wealth or cleverness or skill or power which makes a nation or an individual great. It is goodness, gentleness, kindliness, the sense of brotherhood which alone maketh rich and addeth no sorrow.[43]

This position is, of course, the one now known as the social gospel.[44] Social reformers believed in brotherly love and their work in child saving is one obvious practical manifestation of that belief.

Terry Morrison has pointed out that the great faith reformers placed in the efficacy of a stable family life carried over to their analysis of society.[45] Since they saw the family as the cornerstone of society, it was easy to use the family as the model for the perfect society. Much as the family was to function organismically, so was the society. Just as in the human body, the heart, the mind and all the other organs and parts worked together in unison for the good of the whole, so, too, should all the members of the family play their assigned roles in order to achieve the harmonious totality.

Likewise, in society, each citizen was to be an active and participating member of the wider community. Class conflict was anathema to the reformers. They adopted the liberal position of "man as citizen", they believed in "civic mindedness", they de-emphasized class differences by the use of terms such as "the little man", "the ordinary taxpayer",[46] they wanted everyone to work together towards shared goals.

However, by assuming that the family was the natural and ideal model for society, the reformers were really justifying the hierarchical structure of society, a structure that was dominated by men. In the partriarchal family, the husband/father controls the finances and the power although admittedly in return he is expected to meet certain familial responsibilities. The wife/mother, on the other hand, performs a service function for the family. It is her duty to see to the smooth operation of the family unit and, while she is not the final authority in the family, some decision-making power may be delegated to her. In return for her service, the wife/mother can expect to be provided for by the husband/father. The children in the family are seen as dependent and weak, in need of protection and firm guidance. If left to their own devices they will become idle, immoral, lazy and untrained. They depend on the largesse of the husband/father and the kindness of the wife/mother for their survival. In return they are supposed to be dutiful and obdient.

By using the family model for society the reformers were, in essence, justifying what we now call a class society. By extrapolating from their contention that the ideal family was the best

example for social organization we are now able to see the husband/father role being played by the rich and powerful capitalists, the wife/mother role by the middle class and the children's role by the working class.

This seemed to be the natural order of things and the reformers did not question it; they only sought to make the order more humane. As members of the middle class, (the wife/mother role) they thought they were serving both the interests of the ruling class and the interests of the working class. They thought they could make society "one big happy family."

Because they believed in social co-operation they saw no contradictions in this position. They felt they could honestly mediate between the two economic groups for the benefit of all society. Indeed, they foresaw a society in which all people were well-provided for, in which the rich shared some of their wealth with the poor and in which the poor showed their appreciation by behaving in a thrifty and industrious way.

In summary, then, for the social reformers the purpose of life for the individual was to be self-sufficient, to contribute completely and fully to society. In doing this not only would the individual be happy but society would be healthy too. Ultimately, the aim was, as the social gospellers put it, to create "a heaven on earth."

How was this purpose best accomplished? Harking back to what was said earlier in this chapter about the paramount importance of the family as the basic foundation of civilized society, it is clear that the first step to a better society must be a better family life.

Consequently, every step must be taken to maintain and support good family situations and remedy poor family situations.

Influenced by developments in the social sciences and industry, the reformers sought the most "scientific" and "efficient" ways of dealing with social welfare issues. Because they saw the specific causes of dependency, neglect and delinquency in the environment, because they saw family life destroyed by outside forces, they were able to see a solution to the social problems of the day. The answer was simple. The environment had to be modified.

The means-ends question did not seem to be an issue with them. "Whatever works" could very well have been their motto. Nellie McClung once said, "Never retract, never explain, never apologize-get the thing done and let them howl."[47] "Getting the thing done" meant that more and more the social reformers looked to the state to play a decisive role through the provision of legislation and through the enforcement of legislation. The state was seen as a neutral element in society, an element that could work for the good of all.

In the child welfare field the state was expected to intervene on behalf of the helpless child. J.J. Kelso maintained

> The governing power must come to regard the child as a future citizen, and must see that it has opportunities for education and for development along the lines of industry morality. A child's education begins from its earliest infancy, and the state has a right to insist that its training shall be such as to fit it ultimately for the proper discharge of its duties and responsibilities.[48]

This was one way in which state intervention in the family was justified. Another way centred around the argument that since, in the end, the state bore the financial costs of dependency and delinquency, the state could justifiably attempt to prevent these

conditions by whatever means necessary. McDonald, obviously influenced to some extent by the eugenics movement, presented this argument in 1917.

> For years our Agricultural Departments have been educating stock-raisers how to eliminate the low-bred and unfit from their herds. Only recently have we thought it wise to educate the public how to eliminate the unfit the diseased, the imbecile and the mental defective from the human species.[49]

This did not mean that McDonald was turning to heredity as an explanation for all human suffering. It simply meant that he recognized that some diseases and defects could be inherited and that every attempt should be made to prevent people from passing on these tendencies to their children. He believed, for example, that both parties to a marriage should be required to present a clean bill of health before they could obtain a license.

The social reformers had no fear of state intervention in child welfare at all. Chadwick was proud of the powers of his Department. He boasted that

> Under the Children's Protection Act of Alberta, the definition of a neglected child is possibly broader than in any other place on the continent. This Act, combined with The Juvenile Courts Act, and the Dominion Delinquents Act, places Alberta in the fortunate position of having possibly the best combination of Children's Acts in existence in any place on the continent.[50]

Others outside the province agreed that Alberta had the most advanced legislation, advanced because it was all-encompassing and assigned broad powers to child welfare workers.[51]

Despite the reformers' constant agitation for increased legislation, they also believed very strongly in the need for voluntary activity in the child welfare field. The most organized volunteer work occurred through the Children's Aid Societies which

were organized in the larger centres of Alberta. The Alberta scheme was based on the Ontario model which allowed for

> ...shared public and private responsibility of which the main elements were the following: provincial legislation and supervision, together with some financial support by way of annual grants; municipal financial responsibility for maintenance payments for children committed to the schools and for provision of teaching staff, the right of the municipality to make further grants, and the right to representation on the board of the philanthropic society formed to develop and operate the schools; and private participation in initiating, developing, operating and financing the institutions within the framework of the provincial law.[52]

The reformers' view of good citizenship included a service component and they met this condition themselves by voluntarily serving Children's Aid Societies in a variety of ways. Many volunteered to act as probation officers for delinquent children. In 1914 Chadwick expressed his appreciation for this work by noting

> The active interest and friendly oversight of a clean-minded wholesome man or women, accomplishes wonders as a reformatory and preventive method in dealing with the juvenile delinquent.[53]

The constant efforts and continuous vigilance of right-thinking concerned people in the communities was seen as an essential ingredient in attempts to improve society.

In summary, the ideology of the social reformers was based on various assumptions. They assumed the child was born innocent but was the victim of circumstance. The critical factor in his upbringing was the home situation and the state had the right, nay the duty, to enforce the necessary standards of child care in order to ensure that all citizens were "good" citizens. The model good citizen was, of course, the reformer himself who was hard-working, honest, moral and involved in community affairs.

The reformers saw society "...as a social system unified at its most general level by acceptance of certain central political, social, and economic values."[54] Some tinkering might be necessary to make the benefits of society accessible to all but ultimately the ideological position of the reformers meant that they saw the solution to societal problems to lie mainly with the adjustment of people rather than with any radical change in the social and political system. They were, as Robert Allen has pointed out, "accomodationists".[55]

Footnotes - Chapter Three

[1]Henri Lefebvre, The Sociology of Marx, trans. Norbert Guterman (New York: Vintage Books, 1968), p. 70.

[2]Rutherford, ed., Saving the Canadian City; Tamara Hareven, "An Ambiguous Alliance: Some Aspects of American Influence on Canadian Social Welfare," Histoire Sociale/Social History 3 (April, 1969): 82-98; Sutherland, Children.

[3]Sutherland, Children, p. 236.

[4]Hareven, "Ambiguous Alliance," p. 95.

[5]AR 1909, AR 1912.

[6]Rutherford, ed., Saving the Canadian City, p. xiii.

[7]Sutherland, Children, pp. 235-236.

[8]See, for example, AR 1912, p. 8.

[9]C.W. Parker, ed., Who's Who and Why (Vancouver: International Press, 1913).

[10]Men and Makers of Edmonton, Alberta (n.p., 1913?).

[11]J.S. Woodsworth to Henry Marshall Tory, 26 June 1914, Henry Marshall Tory Papers, University of Alberta Archives, Edmonton.

[12]Reported in Calgary Daily Herald, 15 February, 1909.

[13]Department of Neglected Children, File 6-C-5, Box 123, 75. 126, Provincial Archives of Alberta, Edmonton. (Cited hereafter as PAA).

[14]AR 1922, p. 16.

[15]Morrison, "The Child and Urban Social Reform" p. 8.

[16]Hofstadter, ed., The Progressive Movement, p. 4.

[17]For an elucidation of this distinction see Bernard Wishy, The Child and the Republic: The Dawn of Modern Child Nurture (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1968).

[18]Nellie McClung, In Times Like These (1915; reprint ed., Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), p. 105.

[19]Quoted in Richard Hofstadter, Social Darwinism in American Thought (Boston: Beacon Press, 1955), p. 16.

[20]"The Children's Shelter", Edmonton Daily Bulletin, 6 August, 1910.

[21]AR 1913, p. 7.

[22]AR 1911, p. 10.

[23]Ibid.

[24]AR 1909, p. 13.

[25]Ibid., p. 15.

[26]AR 1917, p. 11.

[27]AR 1915, p. 11

[28]J. George Hodgins, ed., Aims and Objects of the Toronto Humane Society (Toronto: William Briggs, 1888), p. 127.

[29]AR 1916, pp. 7-8.

[30]AR 1912, p. 11.

[31]AR 1913, p. 14.

[32]AR 1918, p. 16.

[33]AR 1909, p. 11

[34]AR 1918, p. 10

[35]AR 1917, p. 13.

[36]McClung, In Times, p. 110.

[37]AR 1914, p. 44.

[38]AR 1911, p. 8.

[39]AR 1909, p. 8.

[40]Ibid., p. 17.

[41]AR 1916, p. 7.

[42]AR 1917, p. 12.

[43]McClung, In Times, p. 99.

[44]See Allen, The Social Passion.

[45]Morrison, "The Child and Urban Social Reform".

[46]Richard Hofstadter, The Age of Reform (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1955).

[47]Quoted in Veronica Strong-Boag's introduction to McClung, In Times, p. viii.

[48]J.J. Kelso, "Neglected and Friendless Children", in Saving the Canadian City, ed. Paul Rutherford (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974). Originally published Canadian Magazine II (Jan., 1894): 213-216.

[49]AR 1917, p. 7.

[50]Ibid., p. 8.

[51]See, for example, Charlotte Whitton, Welfare in Alberta (By the I.O.D.E., 1947).

[52]Splane, Social Welfare in Ontario, p. 254.

[53]AR 1914, p. 14.

[54]John Horton, "Order and Conflict Theories of Social Problems," American Journal of Sociology LXXI (May, 1966): 708.

[55]Robert L. Allen, Reluctant Reformers (Washington, D.C.: Harvard University Press, 1974).

CHAPTER FOUR

THE PRACTICE OF ALBERTA'S CHILD SAVERS

In the final analysis, history is the result of human action. Through that action, ideologies assume real significance. Expressed in another way, only theory that is translated into practice transforms societies. Consequently, in order to understand the historical development of child care in Alberta, it is essential to examine the practice of the child savers while remembering that, coincidentally, their practice will also reveal important aspects of their ideology.

The practice of Alberta's child savers can best be understood through an examination of the procedures and policies of the Department of Neglected Children. Special attention must be given to the adoption of the "placing out" plan by the Department for it was a vital component of their total child care system. As well, the treatment of delinquent, immigrant and "defective" children must be singled out for particular attention because these groups were of considerable interest to the superintendents.

When the Legislative Assembly of Alberta passed The Children's Protection Act in 1909, it gave legal sanction to the work of the child savers in the province. Prior to this time, Lysne notes, welfare legislation in Alberta "where it did exist, lacked definition and had no accompanying administrative structure."[1] The Children's Protection Act thus has the distinction of being the first major

piece of welfare legislation passed in the province although it was initiated as the result of another provincial act.

In 1908 the Legislative Assembly of the Province had passed the Industrial Schools Act in order to make provisions for the treatment of juvenile delinquents. This act empowered the Attorney-General, Cross, to appoint a Superintendent of Industrial Schools. He chose R.B. Chadwick for the position and immediately instructed the new appointee to investigate and bring in recommendations about the best way of dealing with delinquent and neglected children in the province. In preparing his report, Chadwick toured the North American continent and investigated forty-five industrial schools, visited fifty-five juvenile courts, and looked at various other institutions.[2]

In the end, he recommended that the Province of Alberta enter into an agreement with the Province of Manitoba in order that boys needing industrial school training could be admitted to the school at Portage la Prairie. He felt that the costs involved in building a modern cottage system[3] in Alberta would be prohibitive and, since Manitoba was willing to accept boys from Alberta, this arrangement ought to be pursued. In addition he recommended a broad system of child welfare laws for Alberta. Both his recommendations were accepted, the latter one being incorporated into law as An Act for the Protection of Neglected and Dependent Children, and more commonly referred to as The Children's Protection Act.

Although the Alberta Act was modelled very closely on its counterpart in Ontario, it was understood, according to its initiator, R.B. Chadwick, "that amendments would be made from time to time in

order that the Act would become workable under conditions as found in the Province of Alberta."[4] Chadwick also noted that Alberta's Act was regarded as the "broadest" on the continent. This was because Alberta's Act defined "neglected child" in a way which was "sufficiently broad to meet almost any condition or contingency which may arise in reference to the question of what constitutes a neglected child."[6] According to the Act,

> "Neglected child" shall mean a child who is found begging, receiving alms, thieving in a public place, sleeping at night in the open air, wandering about at late hours, associating or dwelling with a thief, drunkard or vagrant, or a child who by reason of the neglect, drunkeness or vice of its parents, is growing up without salutary parental control and education, or in circumstances exposing such child to an idle and dissolute life; or who is found in a house of ill-fame, or known to associate with or be in the company of a reputed prostitute; or who is a habitual vagrant; or an orphan and destitute; or deserted by its parents; or whose only parent is undergoing imprisonment for crime; or who by reason of ill-treatment, continual personal injury or grave misconduct or habitual intemperance of its parents or either of them is in peril of loss of life, health or morality; or in respect to whom its parents or only parent have or has been convicted of an offence against this Act, or under The Criminal Code; or whose home by reason of neglect, cruelty or depravity, is an unfit place for such child, and "neglected children" shall mean two or more of such children;[7]

The normative nature of this definition allowed officials of the Department and Children's Aid Societies to intervene in nearly any situation they wished, an advantage they felt was particularly appropriate when it came to protecting children. The Act was further strengthened in this regard in later years by the addition of two clauses so that the definition of a neglected child also included one

> ...who is incorrigible or cannot be controlled by its parents; or who is employed anywhere between the hours of ten o'clock p.m. of one day and six o'clock a.m. of the following day....[8]

Additionally, the Act was extended by changing the definition of "child" from "a boy or girl actually or apparently under sixteen years of age" (1909), to seventeen in 1910 and eighteen in 1916. Furthermore, Chadwick noted,

> The problems of dependent and delinquent children are so closely interwoven that they have been made as one as far as circumstances will permit, in the Province of Alberta.[9]

Thus both dependent and delinquent children were considered to fall under the more inclusive term "neglected".

As well as defining the clientele, the Act provided for the establishment of an administrative framework. To encourage, direct and supervise the work of the Children's Aid Societies[10] and to act in place of these societies where none existed, the Lieutenant Governor in Council was entitled to appoint a Superintendent of Neglected Children. Every city or town with a population over 10,000 (changed to 5,000 in 1916) was instructed to provide a home or shelter where children could be temporarily housed prior to placement in a foster home. The children placed in a shelter were to be supervised and managed by the Children's Aid Society, if it had been established, or, by the Superintendent, if it had not. Municipalities were held responsible for the maintenance of children although they or the Children's Aid Societies could apply for a court order to force parents to contribute to a child's upkeep.

The Act went on to outline the procedure to be followed in apprehending children and placing them in foster homes. The municipal police, the Royal North West Mounted Police, officers of a Children's Aid Society (authorized by a district judge) or the Superintendent could apprehend a child without a warrent. If a

judge[11] found the child to be neglected within the meaning of the Act, the child was transferred to the care of the Children's Aid Society or the Superintendent of Neglected Children, either of which then became the legal guardian of the child and responsible for its placement in a suitable foster home. Foster homes and shelters were both subject to inspection by the Superintendent or his designate.

In this way The Children's Protection Act managed to legally define provincial, municipal, parental and voluntary activity in the field of child welfare. While various amendments were made throughout the years, mainly to expand the administrative machinery, the basic intent of the Act remained the same.

In dealing with children, the Department of Neglected Children followed a set of general procedures which remained basically the same from 1909 to 1929. Suspected cases of neglect came to the attention of the Department in a variety of ways. A common source of information would be a report submitted by a constable posted with a detachment of the Alberta Provincial Police (A.P.P.). Some insight into the nature of the problems which the Department was expected to deal with may be gained by reviewing excerpts from these reports. In a 1922 report from the Strathmore Detachment a constable reported a mother who had left her children alone over night.

> From information, I gathered that she has been very intimate with a mullaro who is working on a threshing outfit east of Strathmore. Mrs, Clarke's husband is away threshing at present, and sends her very little money for herself and five children. They are both of shiftless nature, and the town-people have supplied them with clothes etc. Mrs. Clarke has been doing chore work. Their shack is like a pigsty, and the children look half-starved and dressed, and appear very dirty. There are four children in the family. There was just one mattress and a filthy old quilt to cover the four children.[12]

A 1924 report from the Grande Prairie detachment outlined the case of an eleven year old girl.

> The mother is working in a restaurant up to one or two o'clock at nights, and is known to be sleeping with different men in town.
> The child seldom attends school, is left to run the streets and then different men staying with her mother at nights in the same shack in which the child lives. [sic][13]

Another common source of information was letters received from "concerned" members of the public. Often these citizens were involved in a local Women's Christian Temperance Union or United Farmers of Alberta group and voiced their concern after having discussed the case at one of their meetings. One letter in the files reported a young girl living with a single man even though the letter writer acknowledged that it was possible that the couple "may be married". The justification for writing, however, was "the request of some of the neighbours who feel it their duty to protect, if necessary, this girl, and place her in safe surroundings."[14]

Another example of this "vigilance" on the part of citizens is this letter from a Mrs. Gratz, president of the W.C.T.U. in Sunnyslope, who writes to complain about a married woman in the district who, with her children, is living with a bachelor while her husband is in the Mental Hospital in Ponoka.

> We have been in hopes that someone in authority would take some action, but as they have not done so, we feel it is our duty in the interests of the good name of our community to acquaint you with the facts.[15]

It is interesting to note that of all the letters in the files which contain complaints from members of the public, the vast majority deal with matters of sexual morality. One particular

area of concern was the effect of adulterous relationships on the morals of children sharing the same domiciles as the adulterous couples. In 1922, Brownlee, then Attorney-General of the province, wrote to Mr. Knight (who seems to have been a solicitor with the Department) pointing out that he was receiving an inordinate number of letters containing complaints about adultery. Brownlee's concern was not only with the volume of complaints, but also with the procedure to be adopted in handling the complaints. While he did not know if anything "could or should be done" about adultery, he asked Mr. Knight to suggest a possible method for dealing with the complainants.[16]

Generally, however, information of this nature, involving children either directly or indirectly, was investigated by one of the inspectors of the Department of Neglected Children. The inspector would visit the home of the child reported as a possible neglect case and would often interview the neighbours and "upstanding" members of the community about the child's situation. A decision would then be made on the proper course to take.

The Department claimed that every attempt was made to avoid breaking up a home for "The home of the child is the natural place of protection and the parents are its natural guardians."[17] The usual procedure seems to have been the issuance of a warning to parents who, in the opinion of the inspector, were neglecting or abusing their children. The Departmental officials would supervise not only the children, but the home as well.

> An enormous number of homes have been placed under supervision and probation, home defects have been remedied, and children have been saved to good citizenship.... Many men have been induced to have themselves interdicted, work has

> been found for both fathers and mothers, and, through the co-operation of agencies dealing with adults, home conditions have been entirely re-constructed.[18]

This method is claimed to have worked in the vast majority of cases but there were also

> ...many cases when it becomes absolutely necessary for the protection of the child, to remove it entirely from the influence and environment to which its life is exposed, and which sooner or later would result in absolute criminality, through contact with crime.[19]

In these cases, the neglected child would be placed in a shelter where he/she would be examined for physical and mental defects. If none were found, the child was considered suitable for placement in a foster home. If a defect was found, every attempt was made to correct it before the child was "placed out".

The Department claims to have been scrupulous in the attention it gave to the selection of foster homes. Prospective foster parents had to make application to the Department whereupon an inspector would visit their home and complete a detailed report on the family. An examination of the forms used by the Department in this case reveals that consideration was given to such items as the type, care and upkeep of the house, the age, health and parentage of the applicants along with information about the children and other people living in the house, the type of literature in the home together with the names of the newspapers and magazines subscribed to, the availability of school facilities, the religious practices of the parents, and the moral character of the father.[20] Prospective foster parents also had to provide three references, one of which had to be their clergyman.

In the first years of operation the Department does not seem to have had difficulty in obtaining foster homes for normal children. Indeed, Chadwick claimed that up to forty per cent of the applications were rejected because the home life of the prospective foster parents was considered unsuitable. Reasons for rejection varied but not infrequently it was because one or both parents were drunkards, had a violent temper or were immoral. Other homes were rejected because it was felt they wanted older children to act "in the capacity of general servants without pay."[21] By 1920, however, Superintendent McLeod noted in his Annual Report that there were "many little ones awaiting homes and happiness, longing for someone they may call mother, and someone in whose strength they can feel secure."[22] This can be at least partly explained by the fact that the number of dependent and neglected children who came under the care of the Department during and immediately after the war escalated rapidly. By 1923, when general prosperity had returned to the province, the number of neglected children being apprehended had dropped from 1,286 in 1920 to 727, a decrease that the Department claimed meant that, once again, all children requiring foster homes were finding placements.[23]

In the final selection of foster homes, and in keeping with their view that the rural life was far preferable to the urban one, the child savers openly admitted that farm homes were given preference over city homes. This step was taken not only so that foster children would be inculcated with "the idea that they are to become settlers on homesteads in the newer parts of the country..." but, more importantly, because life in a "good farm home" meant

that the children usually grew up "with the right ideals and ideas of citizenship."[24]

The position that a rural life was naturally superior was challenged by the reality of the situation in 1916 when McDonald, looking at his Department's work, realized that the "most acute cases" of child neglect and abuse were found in the country. He also noted the high incidence of serious delinquency in the rural areas which led to the fact that "Two-thirds of the boys and one-half of the girls detained in institutions are from the country."[25] In order to rationalize the discrepancy between an ideology which exalted the rural life and a reality which reflected some faults in that life, McDonald explained that the work of the well-organized agencies in the cities ensured that "before a family difficulty reaches its worst stage some individual or organization reports to the proper authorities."[26] Furthermore, he claimed that not only was supervision in the sparsely populated districts difficult but that some people who lived on the frontier felt they had escaped the eye of the law. In addition, the delinquency of country children was explained in terms of the lack of appropriate recreational facilities. The Superintendent felt that if the smaller villages and towns could provide social centres and playgrounds "They would make country life livable, help to offset the deplorable exodus to the city, and give strength to the 'back to the land' movement."[27] Thus, while admitting to some shortcomings in country life, McDonald retained a basic faith in its ameliorative effects, a faith that was echoed by his successor.[28]

Once a home was deemed suitable for the care of a foster child, the foster parents signed an agreement with the Department. Foster parents agreed to treat the child with kindness and consideration and provide him/her with food, clothing, washing and other essentials. They also agreed, among other things, to send the child to school, to teach the child a useful occupation, to treat the child as a member of the family and to report regularly to the superintendent about the child's progress. In the case of older children, foster parents stipulated what payments they would make to the superintendent for "the use of the child."[29] Money earned by the child was deposited in a trust account for him/her.

A surviving Agreement Ledger of Trust Accounts[30] for the 1914-1922 period shows some of the details of contracts made for thirty children. Unfortunately, the ledger does not indicate the nature of the work nor the ages of the children so it is difficult to assess whether they were being used as a source of cheap labour or not. Generally children were paid on a monthly basis, salaries ranging from $5.00 to $35.00 a month. In many instances a sliding scale was used for what was likely farm work. One boy, for example, was paid $25.00 a month for the period of April to July, 1920, $35.00 a month from July to November [harvest season] and $15.00 a month from November to March of the following year. In about two-thirds of the cases, the ledger indicates that clothing was provided over and above the salary. In some instances, too, children received part of their earnings as an allowance ($1.00 to $5.00 a month). In other cases part of their earnings were paid to the Juvenile Court, presumably to make restitution for goods that had been stolen

or damaged. It is also noted in the ledger that six of the thirty children ran away from their foster homes, one, it is noted, when he found that he could not get his wages because they were in trust and another because he was not sent to school as per the agreement between the foster parents and the Department. No reasons are given to explain the other four run-aways.

Foster parents, in some cases at least, were happy with their foster children. Each year, for the period 1911 to 1917, and sporadically afer that, the superintendent published a selection of letters from foster parents in his Annual Report along with some photographs of the children. Despite the fact that we cannot know how representative these letters are, it is interesting to note the attitudes reflected in them. Presumably these are the attitudes of which the superintendents approved since they had chosen these specific letters for publication. The foster parents appeared genuinely fond of their charges and seemed to delight in announcing how proud they were of the achievements of "the dear little ones." Success in school was highly valued as was strength and an agricultural bent in boys and beauty and cultural accomplishments in girls. "Full of vim, push and mischief", "the huskiest looking boy in the district", "a great lover of fun and sport" were phrases used to describe the boys while girls were appreciated for their "curly golden hair", "sweet little smile", "innocent, childish ways". Many of the letters indicate a wish to leave property or money to the foster child and other letters request the placement of additional foster children. In many instances the letters reflect an attitude which shows that the foster parents actually regarded

themselves as adoptive parents. This approach was encouraged by the Department of Neglected Children, especially in the early years, when it appears that the legal distinction between foster placement and adoption was not rigidly applied.[31]

Only one letter indicating a failure in placement is published. These foster parents were understandably upset.

> We now believe you were right about Joe, we cannot do anything with him. He lies about everthing, he is dirty about his person, and he abuses everything about the place. Yesterday we caught him prodding a little calf with a sharp stick, and last week he tied up a colt and beat it with a shovel, also stole two dollars from the school teacher and set a fire going on the tool-shed floor. We cannot do anything with him and would like you to take him away.[32]

Again, we cannot tell how many cases of this nature there were although Chadwick noted in the same report that the Department had discovered that about twenty per cent of the children had to be "re-placed the second, third or sometimes as many as six or seven times" before the right home was found. However, in 1912 he claimed that "rehandling" was necessary in only ten per cent of the cases while in 1917, McDonald stated that fifteen per cent of the foster children had to be tried in more than one home.[33]

Several letters from foster children were also published and they, understandably, all indicate that the writers were happy and well-cared for. Children who were unhappy, it appears, often simply ran away unless they were afraid to risk the wrath of their foster parents upon being caught. An occasional example of outright abuse on the part of foster parents can be found in the extant files.[34]

The Department acknowledged the need to supervise their wards in the foster homes but the practical reality was that the task was

impossible given the limited number of inspectors on staff and the vast distances to be covered in Alberta's countryside. In 1923, for example, seven inspectors covered a total of 103,825 miles (an average of nearly 15,000 miles each) by rail and car investigating more than 1,300 cases. Of this total only 156 cases involved the visitation of wards, this during a period when the Province had 2,568 wards in its care.[35] The Deputy Attorney-General had pointed this out to the Attorney-General in late 1921 when he wrote

> There can, of course, be no systematic and regular investigation, having in mind the number of wards and the fact that there are only seven departmental Inspectors.[36]

The procedure outlined above was utilized in the case of children who were apprehended by virtue of being deemed "neglected". Children who came to the attention of the Department because of activities termed "delinquent" had somewhat different channels to go through since, by 1912, Alberta had a functioning system of juvenile courts. Nonetheless, Chadwick's contention that dependent and delinquent children would be treated as similarly as possible in Alberta seems to be true. Even with children found guilty of a delinquent act, every attempt was made to retain the child in a real home situation.

Children charged as juvenile delinquents would appear before a Commissioner of the Juvenile Court. These commissioners most often had no legal training but had been appointed to the position because of their interest in child saving. Often they were ministers like H. Allen Gray or Rev. Michael Murphy, local businessmen in small communities or women like Alice Jamieson or Annie Langford. The approach used by these commissioners was closely modelled on the

court procedures adopted by the famous Judge Bén Lindsay of Denver, Colorado,[31] a man who was frequently quoted with approval by the Superintendents of Neglected Children.

The juvenile courts were to be held separately from the proceedings of any other court. They were held in an informal way, without juries and commonly without benefit of counsel. The presiding commissioner would inquire into the events surrounding the charge and determine what should be done with the child. In the matter of delinquency, three courses were open. The child could be placed on probation, he/she could be made a ward of the Department of Neglected Children or lastly a boy could be sent to the Industrial School at Portage la Prairie or a girl to one of the provincial social service homes.

The preferred course of action was probation. Thus the child would be left in his natural home but would be supervised by a probation officer who, in the cities, was usually the agent of the Children's Aid Society. The probation officer was expected to oversee the probationer's pursuits, friends and amusements.[38] This concept of probation was designed to meet Section 31 of the Dominion Delinquents Act which stated in part "that as far as practicable every juvenile delinquent shall be treated, not as a criminal, but as a misdirected, misguided child, and one needing aid, encouragement, help and assistance."[39]

If probation proved to be unworkable or unsatisfactory, the child could be made a ward of the Neglected Children's Department and would then be "placed out" in the hopes that a suitable home would

turn the child into the right paths of behaviour. Placement in an institution was seen as the last resort.

> The more hardened type of children can be dealt with only under the rigid system of discipline offered in an Industrial Training School. A child who is in the habit of defying authority, an habitual thief, an incorrigible or a child who does not respond to the milder treatment or probation or to the influences which are thrown around him by the Department of Neglected Children, becomes a subject for the Industrial School.[40]

Whatever solution was arrived at, the child savers saw themselves as doing what was best for the child charged with delinquency. A.M. McDonald quotes, with obvious approbation, an analogy made by Judge James Hodge Rocks of Richmond, in which Rocks likens a Juvenile Court judge to a medical doctor. Paraphrased, the analogy went something like this. When a child is physically ill, he goes to a doctor who examines the youngster, diagnoses the ailment and prescribes the remedy. The judge should minister to the "morally ill" delinquent the same way in the "moral clinic", the court.[41]

While some juvenile court commissioners seemed bent on sentencing children who appeared before them in a way which would set an example for others, deterrence and retribution were not supposed to be considered as motives when bringing down a judgment.

> The old attitude of "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth" is frequently met with in those going through the channels of the Juvenile Court, but for this attitude there is substituted, as far as possible, the idea that preventive and educative reformation are the ends sought, and as far as possible records and terminology eliminate the idea of criminality.[42]

This issue of punishment versus reformation was the source of some friction between the Department and the Alberta Provincial Police. Superintendent McDonald wrote to the Deputy Attorney-General on

September 5, 1918 with a request that the relationship between the A.P.P. and the Department of Neglected Children be clarified.[43] McDonald accused the police of dealing with juveniles without consulting the Department and further complained of the tendency of members of the A.P.P., acting as commissioners, to sentence children to the Portage la Prairie Industrial School unnecessarily.

The dispute about the best treatment for delinquents was exacerbated by the fact that police magistrates held differing views on the matter themselves. As a result, sentencing practices were not consistent across the province. P.C.H. Primrose, a police-magistrate, wrote to Deputy Attorney-General Browning to complain about the sentence meted out to a sixteen year old who had been sent to Canada by his father. The boy had left England with $25.00 in his pocket. In Alberta he had been charged with vagrancy and a police magistrate had sentenced him to four months hard labour at the Fort Saskatchewan Gaol. Primrose expressed his views on the case in this way.

> It is to me an almost incredible story. A boy of only sixteen, about six thousand miles from home, without work and needing to eat-could he be blamed if he stole something, or are there not some other people in the world more responsible for the theft than he would be?....
> ...he might be given a suspended sentence and found work on some farm and helped to do the right thing; as probably, with a full stomach, he would not have any temptation to steal....[44]

Primrose ends his letter by suggesting that the sentencing magistrate be struck from the rolls.

Superintendent Bryan of the A.P.P. also wrote to Browning about this case.

> Personally I do not agree with what Mr. Primrose says as this boy stole a McLaughlin car and gave a lot of evasive and contradictory statements as to his movements, and this conviction will probably have the effect of stopping other cases of a like nature.[45]

What, if anything, Browning did about this case we do not know although the sentencing magistrate conveniently died making it unnecessary to pursue the matter of striking him from the rolls.

The details of a few cases remain in the files of the Attorney-General's Department. What strikes one immediately is the triviality of some of the cases. For example, a local school board charged a young lad with throwing a stone through a school window. The boy was acquited, the school board appealed to the Attorney-General, an inspector was sent out to investigate and, after a volume of paperwork, a settlement was finally reached.[46] Playground scraps seem to have sometimes ended in court also.[47] One gets the impression that some families were using the more formal legal route for the settlement of petty personal feuds. Children's quarrels were being dealt with in court rather than being settled informally at the neighbourhood level.

According to the statistics included in the Annual Reports, the majority of cases of delinquency, however, seem to have related to theft for boys and sexual offences for girls. From the evidence available to this researcher, it can be postulated that, while some of these delinquencies were "childish pranks" and "mischief making", many of them resulted from adolescents trying to meet the necessities of life. A large number of the recorded thefts, for example, were of articles of clothing such as sweaters, boots and socks. This was particularly true in the winter. The testimony of girls charged with sexual offences shows that they had often lost their jobs, had been unable to find a job, or had felt forced into a sexual relationship in order to keep a job.

J.E. Robbins points out that between 1911 and 1931 wage earners, on the whole, were gaining financially, with the exception of the young and the old. He notes a continuous gap of about two years between the school leaving age and the attainment of economic independence. Robbins further claims that the loss of independence was especially severe among the boys whose relative earning capacity dropped by 35% from 1911 to 1931.[48]

With this increasing dependency, the strain on poor families must have been noticeable. While hourly wage rates were increasing, so was the cost of living. However, much of the work was seasonal in nature. In 1921, for example, in Calgary, labourers worked an average of only 40.87 weeks in the year.[49] Children in families such as these would need to go out to work as early as possible in order to support themselves or add to the family income. Yet the young were experiencing increasing difficulty in finding jobs. Thus it is not unreasonable to expect that, when work was unavailable, they would have to survive as best they could. Louis Chevalier has argued in his book Labouring Classes and Dangerous Classes that the city houses a segment of the population that lives in the twilight zone between crime and unskilled labour, working when work is available but turning to crime when it is necessary for survival.[50] This is the condition that may have been experienced by a number of young people in Alberta and may help to account for the delinquency in the province.

The child savers, on the other hand, saw the causes of delinquency differently. They talked about "The Problem of the Boy" and "The Problem of the Girl" because they saw delinquency as being very dissimilar in boys and in girls. Crime among boys was often

seen as the result of "the desire for fun" or "mischief-making". The average boy gets into trouble because there is not much else provided for him to get into."[51] The delinquent girl, on the other hand,

> ..., as a rule, comes from a home where immorality and vice are more or less common and in the majority of cases she is compelled to house herself in crowded and unsanitary quarters with others of her kind. As a general rule these girls are stubborn and untractable.[52]

Chadwick seemed particularly distressed with young girls who eschewed domestic service for jobs elsewhere. He was critical of girls who

> ...prefer to work as waitresses in cheap restaurants, or even in the capacity of dishwasher, in order that they may have their evenings free, that they may be able to enter and leave their rooms at their own discretion, bring in their own companions, and entertain whom they will.[53]

In instances such as these, Chadwick seemed more concerned with the degree of independence of the young women rather than with anything else. Did he favour domestic service because employers in this situation could be seen as surrogate parents for the girl who was away from her own home and not yet under the protection of a husband? Certainly, girls were seen as in special need of protection because they became women and women became mothers. As the "Angel of the Home" they then were responsible for the proper rearing of the next generation of children. In other words, the future of the country lay in the hands of mothers so it was important that they themselves be brought up correctly.

The reformers were also concerned about the sexual activity of girls because girls could lose "all that was valuable in their lives" before they realized "the sacredness of preserving the purity of their bodies and of their minds."[54] Reformers recognized the double standard of sexual morality existing in society but simply acceded to it.

> A boy who makes a mistake is welcomed back into society, and there is rarely any difficulty in finding a good private home for him. A girl who has gone wrong has lost so much that it would be difficult to regain her place in society, even if society were as ready to welcome her as her erring brother. The fact is that she is not so welcomed.[55]

Chadwick had noted in 1911 that one of the reasons girls received harsher treatment in the matter of "sex crimes" was the fact that the consequences of their behaviour were so glaringly obvious[56] and, indeed, throughout the years illegitimate children became a growing concern for the Department of Neglected Children.

The correlation between delinquent behaviour and ethnic origin also came in for close scrutiny. Despite the fact that the majority of the immigrants in Alberta were English-speaking, the Department defined "immigrant children" as those who could not speak English. Consequently, Superintendent Chadwick felt able to claim that immigrant children, "lacking knowledge of the language, ...readily fall into mistakes, violate the laws and commit many misdemeanours...."[57] That they could not speak English was thus considered an essential part of the explanation for their delinquent behaviour.

On the other hand, once these same children learned English they were a threat of another sort. When they could speak English and their parents could not, these children were suspected of devising "schemes under the eyes of their parents" who were too ignorant to realize what was going on.[58] Additionally the children were seen as able to "indulge in many habits and actions which are incomprehensible to their parents"[59] because the parents did not understand the ways of the city. Thus, whether the immigrant children knew English or not, they were viewed as more prone to

delinquent behaviour. An additional problem with the children of the foreign born as opposed to the Canadian born was alleged to be their precociousness in sex matters and their tendency to "succumb more readily to immorality."[60] Furthermore, their parents were often seen as forcing the children out of the home to work -- the girls in unskilled restaurant and hotel jobs and the boys in street trades, both of which endeavours it was said led rapidly to the criminal life.

On some occasions the reformers recognized that the average immigrant had come to Canada to better his life and that immigrants had contributed to the opening of the west. However, the faster they could be brought to a "high grade" of Canadian citizenship, the better it would be. Chadwick felt so strongly about the necessity of absorbing immigrants into the Canadian way of life, that he was able to cite this story seemingly unaware of how it contradicted his other notions about the respect owed by children to their parents and the importance of human dignity in general.

> There has been a tendency for the Canadian-bred child to look down upon the child of the foreign-born as not so fortunate as he, owing to the fact that he has not been born a Canadian. This all has a good effect in bringing the child of foreign-born parents to be a good Canadian. The sentiment is best expressed in the attitude of a small boy who, after having been punished by his father, said he did not object to being punished when he needed it but he hated to be thrashed by a dirty foreigner.[61]

An uncritical analysis of the delinquency statistics of the Department tends to support their assertion that the delinquency rate was higher among immigrant children than among others. With the exception of the years 1910 and 1911 when 15.57% of the population had its origin in non-English speaking lands and 15.58% of the

delinquents had a similar origin, children of the "foreign-born" were over-represented in the delinquency statistics.[62] Several explanations can be postulated. More immigrant children may have been committing acts considered delinquent because in the troubled economic times after 1912 their families likely were the ones to suffer first from unemployment. On the other hand, the "self-fulfilling prophecy" may have been at work. The child savers and police assumed immigrant children were inclined to be delinquent and, therefore, may have spent more time looking for delinquents in the immigrant neighbourhoods and thus found more. There may have been a tendency, exacerbated by prejudice, to deal more firmly with immigrant children than with other children so that immigrant children would be placed on probation while English-speaking children would be let off with a warning. This state of affairs has been noted in the historical context by Gillis and Platt and in the modern one by, among others, William Ryan.[63] Unfortunately the evidence for the Alberta situation does not allow for a firm conclusion on this matter at this time. What we can note, however, is the fact that by the end of World War I, the Superintendent of Neglected Children was less inclined to single out the children of the "foreign-born" for special mention when he was discussing juvenile delinquency.[64]

"Defective children" were also viewed as a group requiring special attention and they were seen as clearly different from all other children. Initially the term "defective children" referred to all children who suffered from either physical handicaps or mental retardation but by 1912, the Department began to clearly distinguish between physical and mental disabilities. In the case

of physical disabilities, medical assistance was provided to deal with both minor and major problems. Tonsils and adenoids were removed, glasses prescribed, club feet attended to, and "simitar tibia" corrected. This was done because it was "a good business proposition." Once a child had its physical defects remedied it could be more easily placed in a foster home, thus saving the Department money.[65] McDonald, also felt that ill-health and physical defects were one of the causes of delinquency and so the improvement of a child's health would often lead him away from a life of crime.[66] In general, physical defects, with the exception of blindness and deafness, were seen as something to be treated as quickly and efficiently as possible.[67]

"Mental defectives", on the other hand, were quite a different problem. They were "the most dangerous element in any community" because they went on "reproducing their kind", thus "tainting the stream of heredity".[68] In their case heredity was considered to be the determining factor rather than environment and consequently institutional care was seen as most appropriate for these children. The best home life would do nothing to alleviate this problem. The Department, as a result, was constantly agitating for the establishment of an adequate institutional facility in Alberta to care for these children who ranged from "the lowest type of idiot to the highest of Moron...."[69] From Chadwick's description of the "Moron" as one "who seems to be normal in every respect except in his capacity to absorb and make use of the ordinary rules ...of society"[70] it would appear that these were the children that are now termed "psychopathic". Occasionally the superintendents recognized the

difference between these children and those who were mentally retarded, but for all intents and purposes, when they discussed "mental defectives," they referred to both types of children as though they were the same.

The Department claimed that these children had to be dealt with for two reasons. First of all, society owed it to the mentally defective "to save them from themselves, and to make their lives as happy and useful as possible."[71] Secondly, society could not afford "to allow this species to propagate itself."[72] Of particular concern was the mentally defective girl who could "always find a mate" as opposed to the defective man who "unless he be of the higher grade Moron type, is usually barred from mating with women unless she [sic] be of very low moral standard."[73] Mentally defective girls were usually seen as prone to "loose" sexual behaviour because they did not know any better and science had "proven beyond contradiction" that their offspring would inherit their defect in sixty per cent of the births. Men, it was said, passed on their defect to only twenty-five per cent of their progeny.[74]

The Department was concerned with this problem on at least two practical counts also. The temporary Children's Shelters were increasingly housing children who were mentally defective for long periods of time because no one would adopt them and there was no institution to care for them. As well, the Department reported receiving numberous pleas for assistance from the parents of such children. In 1916, it is reported with relief that the Department of Education would soon open an institution at Red Deer to care for these children.

It is in the field of the care of mental defectives that Alberta shows its first real tendencies towards the application of science in the treatment of human problems. By 1914 the Binot-Simon Test of Intelligence was used by the Department to classify children and "a certain amount of anthropometric instruments" had been acquired to "facilitate greatly the manner of determining the mentality of children...."[75] In 1917, McDonald was suggesting that the schools establish special classes for "backward" children and that a psychiatric clinic be set up in conjunction with the Juvenile and Police Courts.[75] The recognition of individual differences was beginning to develop.

This examination of the practice of the child savers in Alberta has revealed the fact that throughout the twenty years of its existence, the Department of Neglected Children maintained a mode of operation that was basically consistent with the ideology of the child savers. The practice that was deveploped ensured that apprehended children were generally kept under supervision in their natural homes or in foster homes. In either case, this was in keeping with the view that a healthy and happy home life was the most essential ingredient in raising children.

Footnotes - Chapter Four

[1]David Edgar Lysne, "Welfare in Alberta, 1905-1936" (M.A. thesis, University of Alberta, 1966), p. 13.

[2]AR 1912, p. 7.

[3]A cottage system generally involved the construction of one main building with kitchen, laundry, school rooms and other facilities along with several small "cottages" in shich the boys would live in a setting more like a real home situation.

[4]AR 1912, p. 8.

[5]Ibid.

[6]AR 1911, p. 12.

[7]Alberta, An Act for the Protection of Neglected and Dependent Children, pp. 206-207.

[8]Alberta, An Act for the Protection of Neglected and Dependent Children, 1922, 12 George V, c. 217, Statutes of Alberta, III: 2674 (S. 2, S.S.h).

[9]AR 1909, p. 9.

[10]A Children's Aid Society was a society approved by the Lieutenant Governor in Council and having as one of its objects the protection of children and the care and control of neglected children.

[11]Because of the fairly wide powers assigned a judge in The Children's Protection Act, it is worth noting that, according to Section 2, sub-section (e), "'Judge' shall mean a judge or a retired judge of the Supreme Court or of the District Court, or a police magistrate, or a justice of the peace appointed as a commissioner for the trial of juvenile offenders, or two justices;".

[12]"Alberta Provincial Police Report," 11 October, 1922, Department of Neglected Children, File 6-C-5, Box 124, 75.126, PAA.

[13]"A.P.P. Report," 6 June, 1924, in ibid.

[14]C.E. Holmes to J.E. Brownlee, 14 January, 1922, in ibid.

[15]Mrs. Gratz to J.E. Brownlee, 25 January, 1924, in ibid.

[16]J.E. Brownlee to Mr. Knight, 14 July, 1922 in ibid.

[17]AR 1912, p. 13.

[18]AR 1914, p. 9.

[19]AR 1912, p. 13.

[20]AR 1909, p. 30.

[21]AR 1913, p. 42.

[22]AR 1920, p. 17.

[23]AR 1923, p. 9.

[24]AR 1914, p. 44.

[25]AR 1916, p. 17.

[26]Ibid.

[27]Ibid., p. 18.

[28]AR 1920, p. 12.

[29]AR 1909, pp. 33-34.

[30]"Agreement Ledger of Trust Accounts, 1914-1922", Department of the Attorney-General, Box 4, 72.369, PAA.

[31]These comments are taken from the letters published in the Annual Reports.

[32]AR 1911, p. 22.

[33]AR 1911; p. 13, AR 1912, p.30; AR 1917, p. 16.

[34]See, for example, the case of the Johnson children in Department of Neglected Children, File 6-C-5, Box 125, 75.126, PAA.

[35]Based on information in AR 1922 and AR 1923.

[36]A.G. Browning to J.E. Brownlee, 10 November, 1921, Department of Neglected Children, File 6-C-5, Box 124, 75.126, PAA.

[37]See Platt, The Child Savers; Hawes, Children in Urban Society; Mennel, Thorns and Thistles.

[38]AR 1914, p. 13.

[39]Quoted in ibid., p. 12.

[40]AR 1911, p. 18.

[41]AR 1919, p. 28.

[42]AR 1914, p. 12.

[43]A.M. McDonald to A.G. Browning, 5 September, 1918, Department of Neglected Children, File 6-C-5, 75.126, PAA.

[44]P.C.H. Primrose to A.G. Browning, 2 December, 1920, Department of Neglected Children, File 6-C-5, Box 124, 75.126, PAA.

[45]Supt. Bryan to A.G. Browning, 8 December, 1920, ibid.

[46]"Earl Flodden Case," Department of Neglected Children, File 6-C-5, Box 123, 75.126, PAA.

[47]See, for example, "A.P.P. Report", 21 January, 1922, Department of Neglected Children, File 6-C-5, Box 124, 75.126, PAA.

[48]Canada, D.B.S., "Dependency of Youth," by J.E. Robbins, Seventh Census of Canada, 1931: Monographs, Vol. 13 (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1942), pp. 377-439.

[49]Canada, D.B.S., Sixth Census of Canada, 1921, Vol. III (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1927), p. xvii.

[50]Chevalier, Labouring Classes.

[51]AR 1913, p. 30.

[52]AR 1911, pp. 26-27.

[53]AR 1913, p. 25

[54]AR 1918, p. 38.

[55]AR 1916, p. 14.

[56]AR 1911, p. 26.

[57]AR 1913, p. 17.

[58]AR 1912, p. 19.

[59]Ibid.

[60]AR 1913, p. 19.

[61]AR 1914, p. 26.

[62]In making these calculations, it was assumed that immigrants from the United States and Great Britain could speak English.

[63]John Gillis, Youth and History: Tradition and Change in European Age Relations 1770-Present (New York: Academic Press, 1974); Platt, The Child Savers; William Ryan, Blaming the Victim (New York: Vintage Books, 1976).

[64]In 1914, the term "foreign born" was replaced with the expression "Canadians To Be." The war experience may have increasingly caused people to emphasize "Canadianism", to look for "in-group feeling", to stress "us" against" the Hun."

[65]AR 1914, p. 39.

[66]AR 1915, pp. 31-32.

[67]The Department of Education had an arrangement with Manitoba to look after the deaf and dumb and with Ontario for the blind. AR 1911, p. 21.

[68]AR 1912, p. 41; AR 1913, p. 36.

[69]AR 1914, p. 32.

[70]AR 1914, p. 32.

[71]AR 1915, pp. 27-29.

[72]AR 1914, p. 33.

[73]Ibid.

[74]Ibid., p. 34.

[75]AR 1917, p. 63.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

It was E.H. Carr who argued that

> The function of the historian is neither to love the past nor to emancipate himself from the past, but to master and understand it as the key to the understanding of the present.[1]

In striving to achieve the understanding Carr discusses, a group of contemporary historians have applied the hypotheses of social control theory to historical events. Their analysis has generally centred on human activities or movements in history which were initially recorded as progressive, far-sighted and for the common good. Thus the development of the public school system was first seen by Cubberley, Phillips[2] and others as an important step forward for all North Americans while Katz and others now see the public schools as instruments of repression, racism and class bias.[3] Similarly developments in social welfare, including child saving, were once seen in a favourable light but are now criticized by many[4] as authoritarian and socially conservative achievements.

The social control theorists who are critical of the child savers base their arguments on two major premises. First of all, they claim that the middle class created child saving agencies because as a class they were motivated, not by any humanitarian concerns, but by their own self-interest. Secondly, it is argued, the middle class sought to control society by ordering it in a way

that reflected their view of society. One method adopted by the middle class to accomplish this goal, claim the social control theorists, was the creation of institutions and agencies such as the public school, the juvenile court, the industrial school and the Department of Neglected Children. These insitutions, it is argued, were intended to control the children of the working class primarily through the imposition of the values and ideals of the middle class.

Social control theorists, then, concern themselves with the motives and the methods of the child savers. However, they derive their conclusions primarily from the practice of the child savers, and work backwards from the results in order to determine the motivation. Because of this they do not see that men could intend one thing by a course of action, but unwittingly accomplish something quite different. Consequently, their view usually reflects the attitude that "reality is always mean, hidden and sordid and that men normally act not out of generosity but from fear and from considerations of status and gain."[5] This position is little more than one form of economic determinism or, as Muraskin puts it, the reduction of human actions to "knee-jerk socio-economic conditioning."[6]

C. Wright Mills[7], in his discussion of the problem of interpreting motives, cautions historians against imputing motives to people in the past on the basis of their present terminology and their current view of motives, influenced as these both are by the Freudian assumption that real motives are always hidden. He argues convincingly that "Motives vary in content and character with historical epochs and societal structures."[8] The point, therefore,

is to think of motives in terms of delimited social situations, to examine "vocabularies" of motive within their socio-historical setting, not from our present situation.

A discussion of motivation in human affairs should include an examination of the role of ideology in human behaviour. Unfortunately, social control theorists neglect the importance of ideas as a real and powerful force in human history. That is not to deny that social and economic conditions determine the broad parameters or limits of human activity within a given context, but rather to recognize that within those boundaries "we must allow a considerable degree of autonomy to the formation and role of ideas."[9] Social control theorists, however, tend to reduce ideology to simple socio-economic explanations so that ideology becomes nothing more than propaganda or the conscious and intentional manipulation and falsefication of social reality.

In the minds of the social control theorists, the expressed humanitarianism of the child savers was a sly device developed to conceal the real motive of self-interest. The weakness of this position is, however, that it is unhistorical; it forgets that humanitarianism, both as a Christian ethic and a precept of humanism, has a long history. In fact, as an idea and as a practice, humanitarianism has a much longer history than the class structure associated with capitalism.

In the final analysis, it must be remembered that "critics of ideologies themselves think ideologically."[10] Hence, the cynical view of human nature as motivated simply by mean self-interest is an ideological position, and one with which this author disagrees.

It is her view that Alberta's child savers were motivated by a genuine humanitarianism which had its roots in the universal Christian sentiments of brotherly love and doing good works. To this position was joined the liberal concept of "man as citizen".

From what is known about the material conditions of life for some families in Alberta, and from the descriptions provided by the police, ministers, judges, teachers, journalists, businessmen, Department inspectors, and the children themselves,[11] it is clear that some children in Alberta were hungry, cold, diseased, unloved and physically and emotionally battered. That the child savers would want to help and protect these children is evidence of their religious benevolence or their humanitarianism, not their self-interest.

The child savers did present economic arguments to claim that protecting and reforming the young meant a financial gain for society in the long run. They felt that if children were properly cared for and reared, it would reduce the number of adult criminals requiring institutionalization. However, it appears this argument was most often used with politicians and the business community in order to convince them that child saving was a worth-while cause and should be supported. While the child savers, too, were concerned about running society on a sound financial basis, this does not appear to have been their primary motive in caring for children. Rather they wanted to assist the weak and the innocent in keeping with Biblical injunctions to do so.

Additionally, the liberal concept of polity was one which Alberta's child savers held. They believed that it was the duty of each individual to be a good citizen and this meant that each

individual was obligated to be not only self-reliant but also community-oriented. Helping others was thus an ethic that was doubly reinforced, once by their religion and again by their liberal view of citizenship.

The fact is that for some children in Alberta the intervention of the Department of Neglected Children was critical to their well-being and indeed their continued existence. The child savers at least saw that neglected children were fed, clothed and sheltered and that curable diseases and disabilities were dealt with by qualified medical personnel who volunteered their services in the cause. For the time and the circumstances, Alberta's child savers provided a necessary and important social service.

The work of the child savers is also questioned by social control theorists on the basis that the methods they employed to achieve their ends were authoritarian, directive and conservative. The child savers are accused of creating child care institutions and agencies to control the children and families of the working class through the imposition of a middle class value system. The value of work and standards of personal behaviour are two aspects of life for which the child savers imposed their value system on others, claim the social control theorists.

Contrary to the claim made about the creation of institutions, in Alberta, from 1909 to 1929, the institutionalization of children was minimal although agencies such as the Department of Neglected Children, the juvenile courts and Children's Aid Societies were created to facilitate the work of the child savers. A great portion of their effort, however, was directed towards keeping children out

of institutions and in family settings and only a small number of delinquent children were placed in reformatory institutions. Fines were levied and probation was employed much more often, thus leaving children in home situations. Dependent children, in overwhelming numbers, were returned to their natural families under supervision or placed in the homes of relatives or foster parents.

It is true that in Alberta delinquent and dependent children were treated as similarly as possible. Houston[12] argues that this tendency of the child savers to treat both types of children as one group is evidence of their real intention to control the children of the poor. She claims that by seeing dependent children as potentially or actually delinquent, the child savers were able to justify their interference in the lives of poor children and their families in terms of "the common good". The Alberta case study forces one to adopt a different view of the similar classification of delinquency and dependency. By treating all children who came to their attention as "neglected" ones, the Department did not deal more harshly with dependent children but rather dealt less harshly with delinquents than might otherwise have been the case. By seeing delinquents as children who had temporarily gone astray but were not criminal, the child savers prevented the incarceration of young people and encouraged their reformation in family settings.

There is no doubt, however, that the child savers saw their value system as superior. This was a necessary part of their ideology for it strengthened their claim that they represented the public good and the progressive element in society. Social control theorists are reluctant to grant the child savers anything but it is,

of course, possible that the reformers, at the time, did represent the public good. As Hobsbawm[13] has pointed out, during the French revolution the bourgeoisie wanted to believe it stood for progress and the interests of all people and at that time it was right. One is inclined to feel the same way about Alberta's child savers.

Social control theorists criticize the child savers for the stress they placed on the value of work. Because work was valued, the social control theorists have deduced that the child savers were interested in producing orderly workers. At best, this is a presentist evaluation based on our current and fashionable distaste for work; at worst it is faulty reasoning. It seems more likely, in the Alberta situation at least, that the child savers simply wanted all people to be self-reliant, to be able to support themselves and their families. Hence they stressed the need to learn a trade or take up a homestead. In the light of what we know now about the degrading effects of poverty, an ability to support oneself would have been and is an important contributing factor in the attainment of human dignity. As Bottomore points out, even Karl Marx, that great defender of the working class, "never abandoned the idea that necessary work could itself become, in some degree, a liberating and educative activity."[14] The historical evidence in Alberta tends to indicate that the child savers here, rather than attempting to produce an unquestioning work force, clung to the old vision of a society of farmers, tradesmen and small businessmen where each man was his own master.

The second component of the child savers' value system that that social control theorists most often attack is the one which delineates standards of personal behaviour, especially sexual

behaviour. The child savers believed in cleanliness, honesty and kindness and opposed drunkness, prostitution and incest. If these values were being imposed on the working class as the social control theorists suggest, this infers that working people were unclean, dishonest and unkind and supported drunkeness, prostitution and incest. This is, of course, unlikely but that is where the social control argument leads and as such points out another major weakness in the position; it assumes the passivity of the working class.

Social control theory is an historical argument which allows only one group in society to be active participants in the making of history. The middle class is seen as the essential agent in the process; the working class is seen as the passive group which simply exists and is moulded and shaped by the middle class. It is paradodoxical that the social control theorists who are so critical of the activities of the middle class, and by inference supportive of the working class, should develop a theoretical paradigm which gives so little importance to the role of the working class in the making of history.

Having briefly examined some of the main arguments of the social control theory, it is apparent that it inadequately explains the work of Alberta's child savers. In order to really understand social reformism it would be essential to more fully examine the interplay between ideology and material conditions and the resulting influence on practice. Unfortunately, this task will not be accomplished until many more historians have done the research necessary to expose these material conditions and ideologies. Until we know a great deal more about the particulars, the historical synthesis we are seeking will be inaccessible.

That is not to say that no conclusions about Alberta's child saving movement can be reached. Levine and Levine have suggested that "helping forms arise in response to urgent social need, and that the urgent social need is a product of social change."[15] To some extent, at least, this appears to explain the activity of the child savers in Alberta. The rapid growth and urbanization of Alberta in the first dozen years of this century, and the unemployment and poverty of the next few years created a need for social services of some kind, especially for children who were the most easily abused members of society. The child savers, working through the Department of Neglected Children, alleviated the distress for the children they dealt with during their years of operation in a way which must be judged as generally caring. Coincidentally they helped shape Albertans' attitudes towards childhood through their work, public speeches and newspaper articles. This new attitude towards childhood meant that children came to be seen as more than chattels. Adults came to realize that children had the right to be protected, loved and respected as individual human beings.[16] This is a trend that has been noted by Sutherland[17] and thus this case study confirms his view that the child savers were important catalysts of change in English-Canada. It is also true that in many general respects the work of Alberta's child savers was similar to that of the child savers in Ontario. One is inclined to feel, however, that Alberta's child savers were more rural in orientation than Ontario's were. It was Robert Allen[18] who noted that there were two strands to reformism, one which tended to adopt a romantic "return to the old days" stance and one which was more concerned with rationalizing the

new industrial order. As a generalization, it would appear Alberta's child savers belonged to the first category while Ontario's would fit into the second. This is understandable in the light of the fact that Alberta was still basically a farming society while Ontario was experiencing rapid industrialization.

The work of the Department of Neglected Children is also important because it set the stage for the development of Alberta's present child welfare system. The work of the child savers had shown that a social need, the protection of children, could be met. Thus, despite the passing of the semi-evangelical fervour of social reformism in the 1920's, child welfare work had become a part of Canadian society. By the late 1920's, however, it was being transformed from what Lindemen has termed the "embodiment of sentiment" to the "symbol of technique".[19] That is to say, the personal concern of the child savers was being replaced by the professional concern of the social worker. This trend to the "specialization and the idealization of expertise, the growth of an occupational subculture, and bureaucratization"[20] was becoming somewhat visible in Alberta by 1929. Levine and Levine[21] have described this move by noting that in the 1920's the concept of voluntary social service was dying and professionalized social work was becoming oriented towards individual case work and away from social reform. While their observations centre on the experience in the United States, some evidence of its influence can be found in Alberta. Expertise and training was beginning to be considered more important than a "fondness for children" and those holding a "sentimental" attitude towards children were criticized.[22] In 1926, McLeod revealed that the new social work ideas were making

an inroad when he stated "Case-work is very important. It is the foundation of all social work."[23]

To claim, however, that by 1929 child welfare had become the domain of professional social workers would be to do damage to the historical evidence. It would be more accurate to say that the late 1920s were marked by a struggle to work out a new child welfare system for the province. Many groups, including the U.F.A.,[24] had an interest in maintaining the old voluntary aspects of child care while other elements desired to move to a more professional system. This dialectic was quickly retarded with the onset of the depression when child welfare became part of the general welfare system administered by the Bureau of Charity and Relief.[25] The depression confirmed the all-encompassing role of governments in public welfare although, as V.C. Fowke[26] notes, this trend had begun earlier when social welfare became one of the most important elements in what he calls the New National Policy. Despite the developments which occurred after 1929, it is clear that the fundamental principles of child care established by the child savers left an indelible mark on current practices. This is especially true with respect to the view that a family home is the natural and proper place in which to rear children.

More important, perhaps, is the fact that the child savers were instrumental in establishing a social service which made provision for human needs, an undertaking the private sector in a capitalist economy was unwilling to attempt. Additionally, the work of the reformers must be seen as a major educative force which helped to sustain the social conscience and helped to diffuse humanistic values in a society increasingly dominated by the concept of economic man.

Footnotes - Chapter Five

[1]E.H. Carr, What Is History? (London: Pelican Books, 1961), p. 26.

[2]E.P. Cubberley, The History of Education (New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1920); Phillips, The Development of Education in Canada.

[3]Michael Katz, Class, Bureaucracy and Schools: The Illusion of Educational Change in America (New York: Praeger, 1971).

[4]See, for example, Platt, The Child Savers; Hawes, Children in Urban Society; Houston, "Victorian Origins"; Gillis, Youth and Tradition; Fingard, "Attitudes Towards the Education of the Poor."

[5]Lois Banner, "Religious Benevolence as Social Control: A Critique of an Interpretation," Journal of American History LX (June, 1973): 24.

[6]William A. Muraskin, "The Social Control Theory in American History: A Critique," Journal of Social History LX (June, 1976): 565.

[7]C. Wright Mills, "Situated Actions and Vocabularies of Motive," in Power, Politics and People: The Collected Essays of C. Wright Mills, ed. Irving Louis Horowitz (New York: Ballantine Books, 1963), pp. 439-452.

[8]Ibid., p. 452.

[9]C. Wright Mills, The Marxists (New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1962), p. 114.

[10]Arnold Hauser, quoted in Muraskin, "The Social Control Theory," p. 566.

[11]The information is revealed in reports, letters and court records.

[12]Houston, "Victorian Origins."

[13]E.J. Hobsbawm, The Age of Revolution, 1789-1848 (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1962).

[14]T.B. Bottomore, "Industry, Work and Socialism" in Socialist Humanism, ed. Erich Fromm (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1965), p. 395.

[15]Murray Levine and Adeline Levine, A Social History of Helping Services: Clinic, Court, School, and Community (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1970), p. 279.

[16]See, for example, "Childhood's Bill of Rights" in AR 1916, p. 51.

[17]Sutherland, Children.

[18]Allen, Reluctant Reformers.

[19]Quoted in Roy Lubove, The Professional Altruist: The Emergence of Social Work as a Career, 1880-1930 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1965), p. 85.

[20]Ibid., p. 220.

[21]Levine and Levine, A Social History of Helping Services.

[22]References of this nature begin in 1914 and recur regularly thereafter.

[23]AR 1926, p. 14.

[24]Lysne, "Welfare in Alberta".

[25]Department of Child Welfare, Annual Report, 1935-44 [sic], Item 1, Box 8, 68.100, PAA.

[26]V.C. Fowke, "The National Policy-Old and New," in Approaches to Canadian Economic History, eds. W.T. Easterbrook and M.H. Watkins (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1967), pp. 237-258.

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